Winter 1995

Education, class and gender in George Eliot and Thomas Hardy

Keith Ronald Jones
University of New Hampshire, Durham

EDUCATION, CLASS AND GENDER IN GEORGE ELIOT AND THOMAS HARDY

BY

KEITH R. JONES
BA, University of Birmingham, England, 1978
MA, Clark University, 1985

DISSERTATION

Submitted to the University of New Hampshire
in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

English

December 1995

This dissertation has been examined and approved.

Dissertation Director, Jean E. Kennard
Professor of English

Michael K. Ferber, Professor of English

James Krasner, Associate Professor of English

Michael V. DePorte, Professor of English

Marc L. Schwarz, Associate Professor of History

Nov. 15th 1995
Date

To Lorrie and Alethea, whose loving support and patience throughout this long process have been an inspiration and an education to me.

To my parents, Ron and Lottie Jones.

To my parents-in-law, Nick and Ethel Gerakaris.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

EDUCATION, CLASS AND GENDER IN GEORGE ELIOT AND THOMAS HARDY

by

Keith R. Jones
University of New Hampshire, December, 1995

This dissertation examines the relationship between education, class and gender in The Mill on the Floss (1860) and Daniel Deronda (1876) by George Eliot; and in The Woodlanders (1887) and Jude the Obscure (1896) by Thomas Hardy. The Introduction discusses how, in nineteenth-century Britain, education was intended to 'improve' individuals and society. The Introduction establishes the Marxist and feminist critical background of the study, and briefly surveys the nineteenth-century debates on "The Education Question," and on education for women.

The novels examined show education failing to 'improve.' Maggie Tulliver, in The Mill on the Floss, and Jude Fawley in Jude the Obscure cannot gain access to the knowledge they seek. They 'educate' themselves, without guidance; their 'educations' increase their alienation. Grace Melbury, in The Woodlanders, is sent from her rural home to London, to be educated as a 'lady.' This is impelled by her father's social ambition, and has a disruptive, alienating effect on Grace. Daniel Deronda, in the novel of his name, has the advantages of social position, and of being a man, but his social and psychological integration are unconvincing.

Textual analysis shows each narrator establishing a proprietary distance from subject matter and characters, and using a voice which identifies with the educated

readership of the novels. Eliot's narrators attempt to moderate the presentation of characters' suffering, and to re-affirm family and community. Hardy's narrators maintain an aloof, rationalistic stance, leaving characters to suffer alone. This contrast in aesthetic ideology has many causes, amongst which are the difference in gender between the two authors, and the fact that Hardy wrote at a later time than Eliot.

The failure of education to socially or psychologically integrate characters is common to both authors. All four novels depict education as unable to change character, leading to the conclusion that education reinforced distinctions of class and gender, instead of removing them.

INTRODUCTION

" 'Education?' said he, meditatively, 'I know enough Latin to know that the word must come from "educere," to lead out; and I have heard it used; but I have never met anybody who could give me a clear explanation of what it means." (William Morris, News From Nowhere)

"Upon the education of the people of this country the fate of this country depends." (Benjamin Disraeli, to The House of Commons, 15 June 1874)

"Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe." (H. G. Wells, The Outline of History)

Throughout the nineteenth century in Britain, the explicitly stated purpose of education was to 'improve'; education was an intended agent of class transformation and class mobility. Yet education was prescribed by gender as well as by class, and the relationship between these two socially determined and determining categories remains problematic: class and gender are neither concurrent nor exclusive. Women were a class by themselves, under-privileged in relation to men; yet the barriers separating women of different social classes were as real as for men[1]. While class has been a staple of discussions of nineteenth century Britain, the main traditions of Marxist criticism, reflecting dominance by male scholars, have tended until recently to ignore gender[2]. More recently, feminist criticism has focussed on how gender affects social experience and artistic practice[3].

This study examines the relationship between class, gender, and education in selected novels of George Eliot and Thomas Hardy; it also examines the narrative strategies these authors employed, relating differences in these strategies to experiences

or ideologies which may have been shaped by class or gender.

My selection of Eliot and Hardy follows Raymond Williams' pairing (in The Country and the City (1973)), which I discuss later. There are numerous other nineteenth century British authors who deal with education, class, and gender: Elizabeth Gaskell, the Brontes, Disraeli, and Charles Kingsley come to mind; Dickens could be included, and, later in the century George Gissing, a friend of Hardy, wrote novels that fall within the thematic terrain I map out. I choose Eliot and Hardy because, like Williams, I see in their work a transition in the way the English novel deals with historical changes. These changes centre on industrialization and urbanization, but cannot be rendered solely in such abstract terms. Eliot's and Hardy's novels do not set up a polar opposition between town and country, or between past and present, but depict struggles within a complex and fluid social context.

I take Williams' pairing as a starting point, but I intend neither to complete his work, nor to provide a critique of it. I agree with Williams that Eliot and Hardy are pivotal in the development of English fiction: my approach differs in relying more heavily on close textual analysis, and in addressing gender, which Williams, true to his time, did not confront.

In The Country and the City, Williams notes that a British Council critic described Eliot, Hardy, and D.H. Lawrence as "our three great autodidacts." This is patronising, and wrong: all three received a level of formal education well above average for their time. What does distinguish all three is that they were outside the upper-middle class process of education from which successful writers were expected to come:

> . . . none of the three was in the pattern of boarding school and Oxbridge which by the end of the century was being regarded not simply as a kind of education but as education itself: to have missed that circuit was to have missed being 'educated' at all. (The Country and the City 170)

The establishment view of working- or lower-middle class writers as anomalies is one side of the equation, and indicates the difficulties faced by outsiders rising into literary society. The other side of the equation is the relationship of educated individuals to the world in which they grew up; a world from which they become distanced, but to which they retain strong ties. Williams sees Eliot as a pioneer in showing how

> . . . the knowable community -- the extended and emphatic world of an actual rural and then industrial England -- comes to be known primarily as a problem of ambivalent relationship: of how the separated individual, with a divided consciousness of belonging and not belonging, makes his own moral history. (The Country and the City 174)

Hardy takes this further, presenting alienation starkly in his novels, but the separation of the individual from his or her social context has its antecedent in Eliot's fiction.

Eliot and Hardy came from rural backgrounds, which distinguishes them from Lawrence, who grew up in an industrial mining landscape, and who attended Sixth Form and worked in the city of Nottingham. The rural background in the work of Eliot and Hardy strengthens the "knowable community," and keeps it as a focus in their novels. Starting with a strong sense of place, their novels present a long, traumatic trajectory of change, in which loss is heightened by being clearly linked to a way of life that is changing but not yet destroyed.

The provincial novels of Eliot and Hardy differ from the Industrial novels of the nineteenth century in describing their communities from the inside. Maggie Tulliver,

Jude Fawley, and Grace Melbury come from the communities they struggle against, and they experience loss as they grow away from their past. Protagonists like Margaret Hale in Gaskell's North and South (1854), or Eliot's own Felix Holt are interlopers in industrial society. They do not represent the community, they interpret it, and attempt to change it according to an outside agenda.

One of my concerns in this study is the depiction of the consciousness of change in the protagonists, as they experience the clashing influences of class, gender, and education. Eliot and Hardy experienced these pressures, and contained within themselves the divided consciousness of which they wrote. As members of literate society, they wrote of this divide from a distance, using language and perspectives that were literate rather than provincial, even while they described the acuteness of lived experience. Raymond Williams wrote of Eliot that "There is a new break in the texture of the novel, an evident failure of continuity between the necessary language of the novelist and the recorded language of many of the characters" (The Country and the City 169). In the work of both authors, this gives rise to an omniscient narrative voice that both describes and interprets. As I emphasize throughout this study, the narrative voices of these novels disavow connection with a way of life at the same time as they reveal first-hand experience of that life. The narrators of these novels strive to identify with literate society, but in telling their stories, they share the loss of their protagonists.

Within this context I examine four novels: The Mill on the Floss (1860), and Daniel Deronda (1876), by George Eliot; and The Woodlanders (1887), and Jude the Obscure (1896), by Thomas Hardy. The Mill on the Floss and Jude the Obscure have

received considerable attention, but, as Bildungsromane, are too relevant to this study to be excluded. Daniel Deronda and The Woodlanders I have chosen partly because of relative critical neglect, but also because they confront the problems of vocation, and of female improvement, and because they show the problems caused by ideologies which made women repositories of a special social value.

These novels span, from The Mill on the Floss in 1860 to Jude the Obscure in 1896, nearly the entire combined novel-writing careers of both authors, from the height of Victorian prosperity and confidence, to the verge of the twentieth century. These novels show differing levels of geographical mobility, and of connection between individuals and communities. In each novel, there is tension between expectations resulting from a character's class background and gender, and the desire to improve him- or herself by gaining empowering knowledge. Each novel has a narrative voice keen to distance itself from the ignorance and limitation it describes in the story.

These novels are not an exclusive category. The nexus of class, gender and education leaves an imprint throughout English novels of the nineteenth century, and continues in twentieth century English novels. The novels I have chosen exemplify the prevalent concern with the social and psychological effects of improvement, involving issues of class, gender and education in varying degrees and combinations. My choice does not imply the absence of these themes in the work of other authors. It is intended to allow a detailed illustration of a set of issues that have far-reaching implications for English fiction.

The Mill on the Floss advocates, through its erudite narrator, a detached yet

compassionate concern for the limited characters it depicts. The narrator's mediation implies a gap of enlightenment between the readership and the characters. The narrator can do nothing about the ignorance which shapes the educations of Tom and Maggie Tulliver, except to show that she can see beyond them. The Mill on the Floss shows gender determining the processes of education and socialization, and sympathetically depicts the thwarting of a young girl's desire for knowledge. It ends up sacrificing its heroine's aspirations in favour of the author's gradualist vision of social change.

Daniel Deronda follows The Mill on the Floss in contrasting male and female education, while taking a wider view of education as an agent of moral and social improvement. Formal education is more attenuated than in the other novels discussed: in Daniel Deronda it is a process of character development, aimed at producing individuals who conform to Eliot's vision of social service. This tendency to privilege the informal education of experience over formal schooling exists in the other novels I discuss, and is common in English fiction. Daniel Deronda places greater emphasis on this than do the other three novels I examine, but its concern with character development and social integration is hardly unique. The narrator is obtrusive in pursuit of these goals, to the detriment of the realistic structure of the novel.

While the themes of class, gender, and education are easy to trace in The Mill on the Floss, The Woodlanders, and Jude the Obscure, they are far from explicit in Daniel Deronda. Yet Gwendolen Harleth and Daniel Deronda each pursue a vision of improvement which is set off against the inadequacy of the formal education they have received. The protagonists of Daniel Deronda have social privileges denied to the other

characters I discuss, but this does not spare Gwendolen a period of economic want. Nor does it neutralize the issue of gender: Gwendolen's anguish is acutely feminine, while the latitude and the speculative agency granted Daniel could only be available to a gentleman.

The Woodlanders, in common with The Mill on the Floss and Jude the Obscure, has a narrator who straddles the gap between what Raymond Williams calls "customary life" and an urban, educated world. The central character, Grace Melbury, is sent to London from her secluded woodland home of Little Hintock to be educated, in an attempt to elevate her socially, and to increase her value as a marriageable product. When Grace returns home, education has changed her social expectations as well as the way she is viewed by others. It has not changed her character, although this is hard to determine, as her character and the manner of its presentation are oblique. The union of Grace and the pseudo-aristocratic interloper Edred Fitzpiers excludes the rustics Giles Winterborne and Marty South from sexual fulfilment, and illustrates that the best characters are not necessarily the fittest to survive.

The unsettled tone of The Woodlanders anticipates the "modern vice of unrest" which dominates Jude the Obscure. The novel's narrator judges from a superior perspective, with knowledge of both worlds implied by the narrative. The dismissal of the hero's plight shows Hardy's determinism in unadulterated form. In his quest for a university education, Jude Fawley must attempt to overcome a class barrier, at the same time as he must confront obstacles that originate within himself. Jude learns to understand himself and his relationship to the world: he attempts to escape from rural limitations into some ill-defined region of fulfilment, but this involves a denial of the

circumstances into which he was born. It also requires a denial of his sexuality, which turns out to be impossible.

Each of these novels appears to contradict claims made for education by psychologists and reformers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. At the same time, the existence of these novels, written by authors from obscure backgrounds, shows it was possible to move beyond provincial limitations. The failure of the protagonists reveals the difficulties and the costs of this transformation, and shows how the creation of an educated or cultured realm of discourse, represented in the novels by the narrators, required the establishment of a sanitary distance from this anterior world.

Novels allow an individual perspective on historical changes that are commonly viewed in much wider terms. The nineteenth century debate on education was characterized by lofty and expansive pronouncements and, as Raymond Williams argued in The Long Revolution (1961):

> . . . the way in which education is organized can be seen to express, consciously and unconsciously, the wider organization of a culture and a society, so that what has been thought of as simple distribution is in fact a particular shaping to particular social ends. (125)

Eliot and Hardy both experienced transformations through education, and these are themes throughout their novels. In their novels, education increases knowledge or perception, but does not alter character; by changing consciousness, education creates or exacerbates feelings of alienation, lifting a character out of a traditional identity, but not into a new, comprehensible or practicable one.

In order to clarify the relationship between individual and society in Eliot's and

Hardy's novels, it is necessary to examine the nineteenth-century debate on education. The following section addresses this: it concentrates on social and political commentary rather than on psychology or pedagogy, because my primary concern is to establish the intellectual and ideological climate in which Eliot and Hardy wrote. The latter part of this section deals with education for women in the nineteenth century, as education was sharply differentiated by gender.

Nineteenth-Century Education.

James Mill's essay "Education," written in 1825 for the Encyclopedaeia Brittanica, opens with this definition: "The end of education is to render the individual, as much as possible, an instrument of happiness, first to himself, and next to other beings." John Stuart Mill shared his father's faith in education, and argued in "The Utility of Religion" that "The power of education is almost boundless: there is not one natural inclination which it is not strong enough to coerce and if needful to destroy by disuse"[4]. Education could form and reform; as John Stuart Mill asserted, its purpose was "the improvement of mankind" or "the good of the species." These large aims were to be achieved via democracy, which needed a "cultivated" electorate: "the worth of a state, in the long run, is the worth of the individuals composing it." This state of educated individuals would not happen by itself, but would require the benevolent and methodical intervention of government, which would become "an agency of national education," a means of "fostering the virtue and intelligence of the people themselves." This optimism is absent in Hardy's fiction, which questions human perfectibility, and which denies that society is

sufficiently organized or benign to fulfill the paternalistic role sketched out by the Mills. Eliot's novels, while showing the immediate failure of education, do not deny that improvement is possible; they exemplify Eliot's view that change is slow, and that it must not jeopardize the good that already exists.

The Utilitarian and democratic slants of the Mills' comments were fairly new, but education had long been a means of regulating the individual in society. The elevation of personal fulfilment as a goal derived from Romanticism; the idea that education could provide social and economic advancement derived from the bourgeois ideology of industrial capitalism. This attention to individual interests contrasted with the function of education as a conservative force which sought to accommodate one to a set station in society. This was demonstrated in the way education was seen as a mechanism for deflecting threats to middle-class hegemony, such as the growth in independence of the working-class, or of women. Many saw education as a means of deadening an inevitable blow; the most famous illustration of this is Robert Lowe's remark, made just after the 1867 Bill became law, that "we must compel our future masters to learn their letters."

Raymond Williams argues in The Long Revolution that English education had always had a socially normative function: "The beginnings of English education show very clearly the close relationships between training for a vocation, training to a social character, and training a particular civilization" (127). Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who along with his fellow Swiss Pestalozzi and Helvetius exerted a powerful influence on nineteenth-century British educational thought, claimed in Emile (1762) that education should establish a balance between individual disposition and social circumstances: "A

man truly free, wills only what he is able to perform, and performs what he pleases. This is my fundamental maxim. It need only be applied to a state of infancy, and all the rules of education will naturally flow from it" (Book II)[5]. Rousseau's golden rule is broken by many of the characters under consideration here. Jude Fawley is the most extreme example, closely followed by Maggie Tulliver. Eustacia Vye, in Hardy's The Return of the Native (1878), is another dramatic example; and Eliot's heroines frequently yearn for something beyond the circumstances in which they live.

Grounding the debate on education with reference to "nature" legitimized attempts to restrict change. This made it possible for conservative discourse to stigmatize undesirable changes as "unnatural," a charge enhanced by invoking a distinctly English conception of national unity, or "harmony." It was easy to exploit images of natural growth, as is shown by the semantic shifts which invested the words "culture" and "cultivated" with such complex significance[6].

Education was to play a key role in a peaceful transition to a democratic society, and in preserving unique, traditional virtues of the English way of life. John Stuart Mill, a leading advocate of democratic reform, believed in the need for "educated intelligence," and that "mental superiority" should be given greater weight in the ballot. In the Chapter of his Autobiography (1873) entitled "A Crisis In My Mental History," Mill complains of "riches, hereditary or acquired, being the almost exclusive source of political importance" in English society. Property poisons the relations between the classes, whereas the institutions of a democratic state would be based on "moral and educational" justice:

> . . . if the democracy obtained a large, and perhaps the principal share in the

> governing power, it would become the interest of the opulent classes to promote their education, in order to ward off really mischievous errors, and especially those which would lead to unjust violations of property. (103)

Mill adds that at this point (1830) he hoped that "anti-property doctrines" associated with Owen and St. Simon would spread, not for their intrinsic message, "but in order that the higher classes might be made to see that they had more to fear from the poor when uneducated, than when educated" (103). Mill's commitment to democratic reform and to social justice was paralleled by his belief that education would improve sympathy between the classes, enabling change to be achieved in a civilized, non-violent, English spirit of cooperation.

People recognized the importance of the "Education Question" even if they could not agree on a solution. Thomas Henry Huxley, in his address "A Liberal Education and Where to Find It" (1868), recognized the extent of this debate while in the very act of adding his own voice to it:

> In fact, there is a chorus of voices, almost distressing in their harmony, raised in favour of the doctrine that education is the great panacea for human troubles, and that, if the country is not shortly to go to the dogs, everybody must be educated. (Bibby 74)

The issue had gained urgency at the time of this speech: the passing, less than a year before, of the Second Reform Act had enfranchised a large portion of the working class. John Stuart Mill's speculation in his Autobiography had become a pressing reality.

The belief that improving individuals would improve society might seem convincing, but it had theoretical and practical flaws. First, there was the compromise and messiness of politics, which ran counter to the Utilitarian faith in the omnipotence of

legislation. Important Acts -- the 1832 and 1867 Reform Acts, and the 1870 Forster Education Act -- were characterized as much by accident and opportunism as by finely honed social engineering[7]. In his "Liberal Education" address, T. H. Huxley commented on the "diversity of opinion," and on the difficulties of legislating effectively:

> There is a loud cry for compulsory education. We English, in spite of constant experience to the contrary, preserve a touching faith in the efficacy of acts of parliament; and I believe we should have compulsory education in the course of next session, if there were the least probability that half a dozen leading statesmen of different parties would agree what that education should be. (Bibby 76)

If it is a danger for hindsight to impose a teleology on the nineteenth century, this danger also existed at the time.

There was also the problem of the individual. The derivation of the word 'individual' implies a discreteness, but if individual experience and character were important, then they were surely important in the full range of their diversity. Education had to work with particular minds in particular situations, something that large-scale planning could overlook. Novelists, of course, deal with the particular, which is one reason their work has historical importance. Eliot and Hardy, from distinct regions, with experience of social mobility, could add resonance to an otherwise impersonal debate.

Education tended to be a stabilizing and not a revolutionary force. Educational reform did what it could to preserve the existing social structure while encouraging, in accord with bourgeois ideology, the empowering of previously suppressed talent. Brian Simon asserts that in mid-Victorian society

> . . . the secondary school system had been remodelled to underline and reinforce class distinctions. In particular, the vast majority of working-class

> children were consciously debarred from receiving an education above their station. The handful who might in future succeed in making their way upward would inevitably do so -- and this was the intention -- at the cost of alienation from their class and local community[8].

Control of working-class education remained with the middle class, and the canonized debate on nineteenth century education shows this. Daniel Cottom claims that the middle classes in the nineteenth century "took their mission to be the creation of education as the matrix of social continuity" (33). Education homogenized society in the image of the middle classes: "And when education was designed for the working classes, it was designed to impress them with the idea that the middle classes represented truth" (23). As Jude Fawley, Sue Bridehead and Grace Melbury discover, improvement meant becoming middle-class in occupation and outlook[9].

The absorption of working-class concerns by the middle-class gained authority from claims to national unity. The different classes still constituted one nation, a nation that must remain unified in order to be successful. John Ruskin wrote in "The Nature of Gothic" (1853) that:

> Never had the upper classes so much sympathy with the lower, or charity for them, as they have at this day, and yet never were they so much hated by them: for, of old, the separation between the noble and the poor was merely a wall built by law; now, it is a veritable difference in level of standing, a precipice between upper and lower grounds in the field of humanity, and there is a pestilential air at the bottom of it. (86)

Ruskin acknowledges the menial labour of the working classes as a problem in class relations. And yet these material conflicts were erased by talk of "mental superiority," "cultivated intelligence," or the "best self"; talk which claimed that the solution to national discord lay not in economic change, but in the development of moral qualities.

T. H. Huxley's "A Liberal Education" advocates "natural education," which has a moral, non-material slant: ". . . education is the instruction of the intellect in the laws of Nature, under which name I include not merely things and their forces, but men and their ways; and the fashioning of the affections and of the will into an earnest and loving desire to move in harmony with those laws" (Bibby 79). The context of Huxley's speech -- to the South London Working Men's College -- shows his support for the spread of education, while the content, as its title states, shows his commitment to preserving certain habits of mind. A liberal education is an education in morality and behaviour, and it must be distinguished from practical, or 'useful' education. Huxley gives an example to show the palliative power of education: "If you have no foundation of knowledge, or habit of thought, to work upon, what chance have you of persuading a hungry man that a capitalist is not a thief 'with a circumbendibus?'" This flatters the erudition of his audience, assuming that they can recognize 'circumbendibus' as a humorous equivalent of 'circumlocution'; it also demonstrates Huxley's belief, similar to that of John Stuart Mill, that education can overcome class conflict.

Matthew Arnold, while he opposed Huxley over scientific education, also sought to circumvent politics and class. Arnold proposed the pursuit of "culture," an ideal which he developed in Culture and Anarchy (1867). Culture is "the disinterested endeavour after man's perfection," an "inward" quality which displaces political and social concerns: "Religion says: 'The kingdom of God is within you'; and culture, in like manner, places human perfection in an internal condition, in the growth and predominance of our humanity proper, as distinguished from our animality" (Culture and Anarchy 47).

Culture, like education, must stabilize and improve society: "Through culture seems to lie our way, not only to perfection, but even to safety."

Arnold seeks to retrieve qualities that have atrophied, whereas the Utilitarians -- "the education-mad party" -- sought to inscribe desirable qualities on the minds of their subjects. This notion of the pliable self, deriving from associationist psychology, becomes in Arnold a new religion of humanity, drawing its text from humanity's own creations. Reliance on the accumulated wisdom of history meant that culture became closely identified with tradition.

As with education, culture required the nurture of qualities that might be obscured. Culture must be acquired by study; it is "a pursuit of our total perfection by means of getting to know, on all matters which most concern us, the best which has been thought and said in the world . . ." Culture must precede political reform: "We find no basis for a firm State-power in our ordinary selves; culture suggests one to us in our best self." Class conflict was to be resolved by eliciting the inchoate "humanity" randomly distributed amongst the classes:

> Therefore, when we speak of ourselves as divided into Barbarians, Philistines, and Populace, we must be understood always to imply that within each of these classes there are a certain number of aliens, if we may so call them, -- persons who are mainly led, not by their class spirit, but by a general humane spirit, by the love of human perfection; and that this number is capable of being diminished or augmented. (109)

National unity is to be preserved by this elite of aliens, whose power is, as Arnold's language indicates, 'spiritual.' The problems in this are shown by subsequent shifts in the meaning of the word 'alien.' Arnold's aliens were to unify; 'alienation' now implies an

unpleasant, enforced separation. Brian Simon's use of 'alienation' in the passage quoted earlier describes the effects on individuals of a system of education designed to safeguard middle-class hegemony. Arnold's 'aliens' can forget experience, community, family; they can ignore work, landscape, and language. Characteristics that define one as a member of a given class are removable: "What one's ordinary self likes differs according to the class to which one belongs, and has its severer and its lighter side; always, however, remaining machinery, and nothing more" (107). Stripped of their "machinery," aliens can lead the nation to safety.

The novels of Eliot and Hardy reveal the influence of Arnold and his discussion of aliens. Eliot's social vision was very close to Arnold's, and her novels propound changes compatible with Arnold's commitment to 'culture,' and to eliciting the 'best self' in each individual[10]. Hardy, writing later, and with a bleaker outlook, portrays characters alienated in the modern sense of the word. He lacks the underlying optimistic faith of Arnold and Eliot, and Clym Yeobright in The Return of the Native and Angel Clare in Tess of the D'Urbervilles (1891) are both parodies of idealistic young Arnoldians[11].

There were coincidental similarities between Arnold's talk of culture and aliens, and the position of women with regard to education. Middle-class women were seen to represent society's 'best self'; yet lack of education prevented them from developing their 'best selves.' Arnold was attempting to create an alternative to the materialistic relations of industrial capitalism; women were to perform a similar moral, if not intellectual function in bourgeois society, as guardians of an untainted humanity, inside the sanctuary of the family. John Ruskin enunciated this division of labor in "Of Queen's Gardens"

(1865):

> The man, in his rough work in the open world, must encounter all peril and trial: -- to him, therefore, the failure, the offence, the inevitable error: often he must be wounded, or subdued, often misled, and always hardened. But he guards the woman from all this; within the house, as ruled by her, unless she herself has sought it, need enter no danger, no temptation, no cause of error or offence. This is the true nature of home -- it is the place of Peace; the shelter, not only from all injury, but from all terror, doubt and division. (Defining Voices 81)

Judith Lowder Newton describes this role: "Women, in their isolation from competitive economic practices, were to act as the conscience of bourgeois society and through their influence over men mitigate the harshness of an industrial capitalist world" (19). This purifying, feminine space was cleared by a polar opposition of men and women as contrasting but complementary; it was granted authority by invoking nature[12].

The very vigour with which ideologies of female domesticity were propounded made them vulnerable, as opponents could turn arguments about nature upside down, and because the idea of a special, protected sphere for women was obviously an inaccurate description of social reality. This was clear to contemporary commentators, who could point to economic need, to successful women, and to the waste of resources in under-educated or under-employed women, to show that women should be allowed equal opportunities with men. Advocates for better female education could invoke general support for democratic reforms, as well as the Romantic notion of individualism, in which it was natural to look for special qualities in every human being. In this sense, claims for improved female education denied that women were a special category.

Assertions that men and women were natural opposites gained force from

economic and social pressures which kept middle-class women in the home. The family became the site of a new division of labour, and the adage that "women's work is helping work" took on a new meaning as women were assigned the labour of correcting the moral ravages of industrial society. Sarah Lewis' influential Woman's Mission (1839) provided a manifesto:

> It seems to be peculiarly a part of women's mission to exhibit Christianity in its beauty and purity, and to disseminate it by example and culture. They have the greatest advantage afforded to them for the fulfilment of this mission, and are under the greatest obligations to fulfil it. For woman never would, and never could, have risen to her present station in the social system, had it not been for the dignity with which Christianity invested those qualities peculiarly her own; -- no human eye could thus have seen into the deep things of God -- no human penetration could have discovered the counsel of Him who has chosen the weak things of this world to confound the strong! (Defining Voices 7-8)

'The Woman Question' was directly relevant to 'The Condition of England Question': England's women would provide the country the strength to survive the changes it was undergoing. Sarah Ellis published The Women of England in 1839, the same year as Woman's Mission, and tasked women to "bring, as with one mind, their united powers to bear to stem the popular torrent now threatening to undermine the strong foundations of England's moral worth." (Social Issues 109)[13]

W. R. Greg's essay "Why Are Women Redundant?", published in the National Review in 1862, defines woman's work as moral rather than economic, and as taking place in the home rather than in the marketplace. The British use of the word "redundant" (equivalent to the current US 'laid off' or 'unemployed') is relevant to the logistical slant of Greg's argument, which bemoans "an enormous and increasing number of single

women in the nation, a number quite disproportionate and abnormal . . . who have to earn their own living, instead of spending and husbanding the earnings of men." Greg characterized these women, despite their numbers, as aberrations who, "not having the natural duties and labours of wives and mothers, have to carve out artificial and painfully sought occupations for themselves; who, in place of completing, sweetening and embellishing the existence of others, are compelled to lead an independent and incomplete existence of their own." The ideological load carried by the word 'natural' is unsupportable, especially as one of Greg's solutions (which appeared in various guises during the middle of the century) was for half-a-million women to emigrate to the colonies[14].

The connection between female indigence and marriage is clear in the fiction of Eliot and Hardy. Maggie Tulliver, Gwendolen Harleth, Grace Melbury and Sue Bridehead all confront the problem in one way or another. Arabella Donn, in Jude the Obscure, survives through manipulative sexual wiles. The skills she does possess -- those of pig-farmer and barmaid -- are secondary to her ability to entrap a male provider.

An alternative view to Greg's did not blame women for the ills their numerical superiority to men caused; instead, it acknowledged that many women had acute economic need, and that education was necessary to overcome this. Harriet Martineau commented in an essay entitled "Middle-Class Education in England: Girls," which was published in Cornhill Magazine in November 1864:

> At the time at which we are living, it is an indisputable fact that above two millions of the women in England are self-supporting workers: it is an admitted truth that while the customs of English society remain what they are,

> there must be tens of thousands of middle-class women dependent on their own industry . . .

Martineau's assertion that "It is settled that marriage is much less general than formerly" shows how misleading the domestic ideal was. The laws of arithmetic alone thwarted it, as there was a surplus of marriageable women, caused by several factors. In small part, this was due to the Napoleonic Wars, although this had less impact as the century progressed. More important was the emigration of many middle-class men to fill Civil Service positions in the growing empire, and the tendency of eligible men to remain bachelors, or to delay marriage until they could afford to support a household.

Arguments against such positions as Greg's could further exploit logistics, by pointing out that women were a wasted resource, and that denying them education and employment squandered valuable talent. John Stuart Mill made this part of his plea for female emancipation; Emily Davies drives the same point home with a pithy analogy in The Higher Education of Women (1866): "A man who should carry one of his arms in a sling, in order to secure greater efficiency and importance to the other, would be regarded as a lunatic" (176). Millicent Garret Fawcett took the opposite view to Greg on 'redundant' women: "It is not too much to say that one of the great curses of our society is the enforced idleness of such a large proportion of its members as is formed by the women who have nothing to do." These arguments show the confusion which typified the social relegation of women. T. H. Huxley observed that "Girls have been educated to be either drudges or toys beneath man, or a sort of angel above him." Emily Davies debunked the idea of a hierarchy of the sexes: "The only intelligible principle on which

modern writers show anything like unanimity, is that women are intended to supply, and ought to be made, something which men want. What that may be, it is not easy to discover" (23).

This confusion was reflected in the institutions and practices of women's education. John Stuart Mill complained in The Subjection of Women (1869) of the lack of organized schooling for women, claiming that "the only educated women are the self-educated"; women received "an education of the sentiments rather than of the understanding." Emily Davies concluded that "a very brief and attenuated course of instruction, beginning late and ending early, is believed to constitute a good and complete education for a woman" (39). Harriet Martineau wrote in "Middle-Class Education in England: Girls" that: ". . . in the case of the Girls, there is no tradition, no common conviction, no established method, no imperative custom, -- nothing beyond a supposition that girls must somehow learn to read and write, and to practice whatever accomplishments may be the fashion at the time."

The education of boys was faulty, but there was a huge disparity between the sexes. The entire debate on female education was characterized by this knowledge- or opportunity-envy; by the attempt to overcome a negligence which led to an atrophy. Maria G. Grey argued in On the Special Requirements for Improving the Education of Girls (1872) that this problem was compounded by a lack of purpose. Where women of the upper classes could work for "excellence" and "the attainment of knowledge for its own sake," the majority of women were limited to domesticity:

Girls, on the contrary, of the classes we are dealing with, are brought up to

> think their education of no consequence, except as fitting them to take their place in their own social sphere. They are taught explicitly, or implicitly, that marriage is the only career open to them, and they learn but too quickly that success in that career does assuredly not depend on their efforts at self-improvement.

Grey's language shows the concern with 'improvement,' and with the need, recognized by Raymond Williams, for education to fit one to a social role. In being denied the agency and the social mobility that were theoretically possible for men, it was much harder for women to denote a specific, realizable purpose for education. The ideology of the woman's sphere, in which women's function was to support others, acted as a powerful drag on self-development. In preparing women for a passive and domestic role, the best education was literally no education at all.

Maggie Tulliver, Gwendolen Harleth, and Dorothea Brooke receive no education that prepares them to do anything, and all seek a solution in some version of the woman's mission. Hardy's heroines -- Grace Melbury and Eustacia Vye for example -- are ill-educated, and are undecided as to whether to survive by exploiting their sexuality, or by attempting to copy masculine models of action. Sue Bridehead fills the role of teacher for which she has been trained, but retreats into marriage to maintain outward conventionality.

Even if marriage was statistically impossible for many women, arguments for improved female education had to face the polar opposition of the genders and its division of labour. Emily Davies began The Higher Education of Women by arguing that while female education should aim at producing good wives and mothers, this was not enough. She advocated "that the object of female education is to produce women of the

best and highest type, not limited by exclusive regard to any specific functions hereafter to be discharged by them" (2). In response to the charge that intellectual improvement would interfere with domestic duties, Davies points to the historical nature of the woman's sphere: "It seems to have been forgotten that women have always been married" (109). The rhetoric of the woman's sphere proclaimed an expansion of women's responsibilities, while in fact it limited them to domestic duties. Davies asks if schemes for female education are not best advised "to discard the shifting standard of opinion, and to fall back upon the old doctrine which teaches educators to seek in every human soul for that divine image which it is their work to call out and to develope?" (35). In this argument Davies stays close to the etymology of the verb 'to educate,' and to Romantic ideas of potential selfhood. Davies acutely notes that "The educational question depends, as we have seen, on the larger question of women's place in the social order" (36). In her conclusion, Davies reiterates "that those who ask for a fuller and freer life for women have no desire to interfere with distinctions of sex, adding that she does not deny the differences between "manhood" and "womanhood" (164). The cornerstone of Davies' argument is that "there is between the sexes a deep and broad basis of likeness" (169). Like George Eliot, Davies believed that improved female education would fulfill relations between the sexes: "It is in fact as a means of bringing men and women together, and binding over the intellectual gulf between them, that a more liberal education and a larger scope for women are chiefly to be desired" (123).

Arguments for female education had to define this "intellectual gulf" as a result not of 'natural' deficiencies, but of artificial social conditions. Millicent Garrett Fawcett

claimed that efforts for "national education" and "the education of the people" were usually directed towards the working classes, to the exclusion of middle- and upper-class women:

> The effect of this lack of mental training in women has been to produce such a deterioration in their intellects as, in some measure, to justify the widely-spread opinion that they are innately possessed of less powerful minds than men, that they are incapable of the highest mental culture, that they are born illogical, created more impetuous and rash than men. This it is at present, owing to the want of education amongst women, impossible absolutely to disprove. ("The Education of Women of the Middle and Upper Classes" Macmillan's Magazine XVII (1868))

John Stuart Mill made similar assertions in The Subjection of Women, while confronting the invocation of 'nature':

> What is now called the nature of women is an eminently artifical thing -- the result of forced repression in some directions, unnatural stimulation in others. It may be asserted without scruple, that no other class of dependents have had their character so entirely distorted from its natural proportions by their relations with their masters. (22)

Mill deals with the problem of nature by usurping the concept to his side of the debate. He argues that what is considered natural is often just convention: "But was there ever any domination which did not appear natural to those who possessed it?"; "The subjection of women to men being a universal custom, any departure from it naturally appears unnatural." Mill's argument was impelled by his sense of a cumulative historical improvement in political and social awareness. If the trend towards equality and democracy were inevitable, then repression and resistance to change were unnatural[15].

One strength of the argument for increased educational opportunities for women was its similarity to the general debate over education (in other words, the debate over

'male' education.) It was a simple, even inevitable step to extend democratic and Romantic ideas to include women, and it was possible, within limits, to outflank bourgeois resistance by invoking the argument that women represented half (or more) of the resources of the country. The woman's sphere, and polarized conceptions of gender remained substantial ideological barriers, but these ideas were less tangible than social and economic realities, and their very intangibility was an attempt to hide the fact that women were bound up in the market relations of industrial capitalism. The varying attitudes women took towards female emancipation show that the ideology of a special woman's mission was an inward as well as an outward obstacle.

INTRODUCTION NOTES

[1]Engels' The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State (1884) tied gender oppression to economic oppression through the emergence of the family. Nevertheless, the realities of economic deprivation in the nineteenth century were different for women of different classes. The paradigmatic family, with the woman limited to control of the domestic sphere, was middle-class. Working-class women faced another kind of exploitation in factories, sweat-shops, and domestic service.

[2]Perry Anderson's Considerations on Western Marxism (1976) discusses the contribution of only one woman, Rosa Luxemburg. Anderson does not discuss either the women's movement or the specific oppression of women; this is less an omission on his part than a reflection of the absence of these issues from Marxist debate up to the time when he wrote. Terry Eagleton comments in Literary Theory: An Introduction (1983):

> The women's movement rejected the narrowly economic focus of much classical Marxist thought, a focus which was clearly incapable of explaining the particular conditions of women as an oppressed social group, or of contributing significantly to their transformation. For though the oppression of women is indeed a material reality, a matter of motherhood, domestic labour, job discrimination and unequal wages, it cannot be reduced to these factors: it is also a question of sexual ideology, of the ways men and women image themselves and each other in male-dominated society, of perceptions and behaviour which range from the brutally explicit to the deeply unconscious. (148)

While major Marxist thinkers this century -- Lukacs, Brecht, Benjamin, Sartre, Althusser, Macherey and Jameson for example -- have not dealt directly with issues of gender, there have been recent attempts to bring Marxism and feminism together under the umbrella of post-structuralism. Such attempts have not always been convincing. Women and Revolution: A Discussion of the Unhappy Marriage between Marxism and Feminism, edited by Lydia Sargent, discusses some of the problems in this union.

> [3]Elaine Showalter asserts in "The Feminist Critical Revolution" that Whether concerned with the literary representations of sexual difference, with the ways that literary genres have been shaped by masculine or feminine values, or with the exclusion of the female voice from the institutions of literature, criticism, and theory, feminist criticism has established gender as a fundamental category of literary analysis. (Showalter 3)

[4]This belief derived from eighteenth-century thought, and especially from associationist psychology. Helvetius, in De L'esprit (1758) made the famous assertion that "L'education peut tout." John Locke was especially influential, and dealt with education in his Essay Concerning Human Understanding (1690), in Some Thoughts Concerning Education (1693), and in the fragmentary Of the Conduct of Human

Understanding (1706). J. W. Adamson, in the preface to English Education 1789-1902 (1930) gives a concise background to nineteenth-century English educational reform.

[5]For Rousseau's influence on British thought see Adamson, 'Introduction,' pp.5-9; and Armytage, The French Influence on English Education (1968), chapter 4, pp. 27-35.

[6]Raymond Williams discusses this at length, in Culture and Society 1780-1950 (1958), and in Keywords (1976) pp. 87-93, where he notes that "Hostility to the word 'culture' in English appears to date from the controversy around Arnold's views." 'Culture' and its derivatives continue to evolve in awkward ways, as is shown by the current debate in the US over 'cultural literacy.'

[7]The 1832 Reform Act, generally seen by historians as a political victory for the middle classes, extended the franchise to 10 Pound householders in towns, 10 Pound copyholders and long leaseholders, and 50 Pound short leaseholders and tenants-at-will in the counties. David Thomson, in England in the Nineteenth Century (1950), argues that this represented an increase of less than 50%, but adds: "Much more significant was the redistribution of seats among the constituencies." This eliminated many rotten boroughs, and gave more equal representation to the new industrial towns and cities.

Of the 1867 Reform Act, Thomson writes:

> . . . the vote in the counties went to all occupiers of houses rated at 12 Pounds or more and all leaseholders with property of at least 4 Pounds annual value; in the boroughs, to all householders who had been in residence for at least one year and lodgers paying 10 Pounds or more per annum. Some forty-five seats were redistributed so as to strengthen the representation of the counties and the larger towns at the expense of the smaller towns. The effect was to increase the middle-class vote in the counties and extend the vote to the artisans and better-to-do workers in the towns, although the smaller boroughs were still over-represented in the Commons. (128)

The Elementary Education Act of 1870, according to Adamson, "did not create a system of national education, since it was confined to the elementary instruction of children below thirteen years of age." Adamson also writes that the Act "only partially realized" the Radical aim of "education, universal, gratuitous, compulsory." Much of the resistance to the more extreme provisions of the original Bill came from the churches, who fought against the Radical proposal to make education secular by replacing church control with state control. But the Act did empower the Education Department to create school boards in areas where insufficient schooling was available. (See Adamson, Ch. XIII.)

[8]In an essay entitled "Systematisation and segmentation: the case of England," Simon identifies market forces and partial involvement by the state as shaping changes in England's educational institutions in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. Social and political factors were more important than the "directly economic." Social differentiation through education was reinforced by an "increasing complexity of

occupational structure." Citing Geoffrey Best and Harold Perkin to support his case, Simon claims that

> It could be said that the function of education emerging from the measures adopted in mid-century was not so much that of ensuring the reproduction of society with a divided social structure as the actual reinforcement and more precise refinement of an hierarchical society in which each stratum knew, was educated for, and accepted, its place. (The Rise of the Modern Educational System 92)

[9]Cottom quotes a comment made by Engels in 1858: "This most bourgeois of all nations is apparently aiming ultimately at the possession of a bourgeois aristocracy and a bourgeois proletariat as well as a bourgeoisie."

[10]In his belief that change must be prescribed by the past, Arnold's position was almost identical to Eliot's. U. C. Knoepflmacher develops the connection between Arnold and Eliot in Religious Humanism and the Victorian Novel (1965):

> . . . it is by no means an exaggeration to say that, at least in its final phase, George Eliot's ethical humanism finds its most immediate counterpart in the religious essays of Matthew Arnold. Basic for this similarity is their identical redefinition of "culture." (62)

[11]For the relationship between Arnold's poem "The Scholar Gypsy" and Jude the Obscure, see Ward Hellstrom, "Hardy's Scholar Gypsy" in Goodin, ed., The English Novel in the Nineteenth Century, pp. 196-213. For a discussion of the influence of Arnold on Hardy, see David DeLaura, "The Ache of Modernism in Hardy's Later Novels," ELH XXXIV (1967) pp. 380ff.

[12]In The Industrial Reformation of English Fiction, 1832-1867 (1985), Catherine Gallagher discusses Sarah Ellis' Women of England (1844) and Arthur Helps' Claims of Labour (1844), arguing that "both affirm that the cooperative relations of family life are the best antidote to the competitive strife of human relationships in society at large" (115). The domestic sphere was a realm of inactive and insulated purity:

> . . . it had to be a protected enclave where women and children gave voluntary and loving submission to a benign patriarch. Since women set the tone of family relations, they had to embody the soft virtues of acceptance and resignation. They could not, therefore, be allowed to participate in the toughening encounters of the marketplace. (120)

Mary Poovey's Uneven Developments: The Ideological Work of Gender in Mid-Victorian England (1988) argues that this notion of insulating women from unpleasant social realities was unrealistic.

[13]See also Nancy Armstrong, Desire and Domestic Fiction (1987), and Jenni Calder, Women and Marriage in Victorian Fiction (1976) for further discussions of the

woman's sphere. Ruskin's "Sesames and Lilies" (1865) gives a conventional contemporary articulation to the arguments in favour of circumscribing the agency of women. Kate Millett's essay "The Debate over Women: Ruskin vs. Mill" in Suffer and be Still (1972) (ed. Martha Vicinus) is also relevant.

[14]See A. James Hammerton, "Feminism and Female Emigration, 1861-1886" in Vicinus, ed. A Widening Sphere (1977).

[15]Kate Millett discusses Mill's attention to the concept of nature in "The Debate over Women: Ruskin vs. Mill": "Mill realizes that what is commonly regarded as feminine character is but the predictable outcome of a highly artificial system of cultivation, or to adopt his own metaphor, society's female is a plant grown half in a steam bath and half in the snow" (127).

CHAPTER I

"ILL-LUCK" AND "THE WIDER VISION": EDUCATION IN "THE MILL ON THE FLOSS"

"Let men take their choice. Man and woman were made for each other, though not to become one being; and if they will not improve women, they will deprave them." (Mary Wollstonecraft, Vindication of the Rights of Woman (1792))

"We women are always in danger of living too exclusively in the affections; and though our affections are perhaps the best gift we have, we ought also to have our share of the more independent life -- some joy in things for their own sake." (George Eliot, Letters V: 106)

The Mill on the Floss (1860) is a typical nineteenth-century novel in that it focusses on individual experience, and it is typical of George Eliot in sacrificing the aspirations of the individual to the wider claims of society. The novel presents the quest of Maggie Tulliver, who seeks self-realization through the acquisition of knowledge. This quest, however, is not allowed to disrupt Eliot's agenda for social change, which privileged the community over the individual, and evolution over revolution.

The lack of any organized process to satisfy Maggie's yearning for knowledge is a central themes of The Mill on the Floss. Maggie fails for several reasons, all of which are duplicated in different combinations, or to different degrees in the other three novels I examine. She has, like Jude Fawley, no clear conception of what she wants, and no role-model to follow. Like Jude, and Grace Melbury, she struggles against provincial ignorance; and like the more privileged Gwendolen Harleth, she learns bitterly the restrictions of womanhood. As with Gwendolen, Maggie's attempt to improve herself is

subordinated to the part she can play in improving others.

Maggie's yearnings are historically premature, which emphasizes how Eliot's attitude to female education was qualified by a characteristic gradualism. Eliot wrote in her 1855 essay "Margaret Fuller and Mary Wollstonecraft":

> On one side we hear that woman's position can never be improved until women themselves are better; and on the other, that women can never become better until their position is improved -- until the laws are made more just, and a wider field opened to feminine activity. But we constantly hear the same difficulty stated about the human race in general. There is a perpetual action and reaction between individuals and institutions; we must try and mend both by little and little -- the only way in which human things can be mended.

Eliot did not see the question of education for women as a purely female issue, but as a function of the interdependence of the two sexes: what Gillian Beer describes as the tendency to see "men and women as locked together by their needs and hopes, and by their common misunderstanding" (George Eliot 2). Eliot argues "that the mutual delight of the sexes in each other must enter into the perfection of life," and "that complete union and sympathy can only come by women having opened to them the same store of acquired truth or beliefs as men have, so that their grounds of judgment may as far as possible be the same" (Letters IV: 467-68).

The Mill on the Floss, however, fails to solve a dilemma common to the novels in this study. The conclusion of the novel, which forcibly joins Tom and Maggie in tragic union at their deaths, does not dissuade us that 'character is destiny.' Brother and sister remain divided by temperament and "sympathy," and by the differences in their educations.

The narrator must patch together the experiences of Tom and Maggie to conform to Eliot's view of gradual, community-centred change. With its detailed examination of individual character, The Mill on the Floss cannot hide the profound differences between Tom and Maggie: they are too distinct to be absorbed into the generalized perspective Eliot felt necessary for change, and consequently the quests of Tom and Maggie are foredoomed. The narrator attempts to overcome disjunctures by frequent interpolations, which attempt to modify the implications of the narrative. These interpolations define the character of the narrator, and create an insulating distance of hindsight and superior knowledge between the readership and the text.

The foreclosure of Maggie's search for identity is facilitated by the Bildungsroman form of the novel. The Bildungsroman was a resistant form for women writers, based on masculine models of character development. Marianne Hirsch notes "the ironic conjunction of social defeat and spiritual affirmation in the novel" (37), while Jane McDonnell concludes that: "Eliot's inability (or refusal) to continue the book as Bildungsroman can be seen as a reflection on the genre itself. The Bildungsroman was, in the nineteenth-century at least, a recalcitrant form for women writers, one which did not fulfill the normative expectations of a woman's life history" (400). There was, it would seem, little reason to expect the story of Maggie Tulliver to be a narrative of success, if success is defined in masculine terms of integration[1]. The same fate awaits Tom Tulliver, for although he is male, he is bound up with the plight of his sister, and with the imperatives of change defined by Eliot.

Eliot saw change as developmental and organic; it was achieved "little by little,"

not atomistically. She approached feminist issues cautiously and holistically: unsure about equality for women in general, she was committed to equality of education. Her views, expressed in a letter to Emily Davies, reveal many conventional ideas about the role of women: "What I should like to be sure of as a result of higher education for women -- a result that will come to pass over my grave -- is, their recognition of the great amount of social unproductive labour which needs to be done by women, which is now either not done at all or done wretchedly" (Letters IV, 425). Eliot demonstrated her belief in a version of the woman's sphere when she wrote of "the preparation that lies in woman's peculiar constitution for a special moral influence" (Letters IV 467-68); improved education for women would enhance this, and would produce women intellectually equal to men, without challenging the division of 'emotional labour.'[2] Eliot saw women carrying out "social unproductive labour," countering the materialism of industrial society with moral and spiritual support.

In The Mill on the Floss, women's access to education is bound up with imperatives of "social unproductive labour." Maggie's hunger for knowledge is inseparable from her "hunger of the heart." As she tells her father's helper Luke, her knowledge can be part of her love for her brother: "Tom's not fond o'reading. I love Tom so dearly, Luke -- better than anybody else in the world. When he grows up, I shall keep his house, and we shall always live together. I can tell him everything he doesn't know" (81). Maggie's desires are subsumed by family and community. The Mill on the Floss exemplifies the claim of Bonnie Zimmerman that: "Eliot's novels all investigate the issues of female expectation and oppression; a principal theme in each concerns the

transformation of woman's desire for power and transcendence into submission, renunciation, and the acceptance of her destiny as an agent of human sympathy"[3] (Smith 196). Maggie tells Philip Wakem: "But I begin to think there can never come much happiness to me from loving: I have always had so much pain mingled with it. I wish I could make myself a world outside it, as men do" (528). Maggie cannot make this separate world, and her quest for self-improvement is thwarted by the imperative to support others.

The narrator of The Mill on the Floss carries out "social unproductive labour" by acting as a moderator between past and present, boy and girl, ignorance and knowledge, narrative and reader. An intimate knowledge of the Tullivers and of St. Oggs, imparted to the reader as an education in itself, distinguishes the narrator from her readers and from the characters she describes[4]. The desire to educate the reader, and the interpolations this causes, identify the narrator more with her middle-class readers than with the Tullivers, an identification reinforced by historical distance from the events of the novel, which is set several decades in the past[5].

An example of the narrator's moderating role is the Chapter "A Variation of Protestantism Unknown to Bossuet." Strategically placed in the centre of the novel, this chapter shows how the Tullivers represent a rudimentary stage in human evolution. This evolution is painful and halting, but according to the narrator it is inevitable:

> I share with you this sense of oppressive narrowness; but it is necessary that we should feel it, if we care to understand how it acted on the lives of Tom and Maggie -- how it has acted on young natures in many generations, that in the onward tendency of human things have risen above the mental level of the generation before them, to which they have been nevertheless tied by the

> strongest fibres of their hearts. The suffering, whether of martyr or victim, which belongs to every historical advance of mankind, is represented in this way in every town by hundreds of obscure hearths: and we need not shrink from this comparison of small things with great; for does not science tell us that its highest striving is after the ascertainment of a unity which shall bind the smallest things with the greatest? In natural science, I have understood, there is nothing petty to the mind that has a large vision of relations, and to which every single object suggests a vast sum of conditions. It is surely the same with the observation of human life. (363)

The narrator reveals erudition, and an understanding that are results of a successful education; this illustrates how education can create an enlightened distance from an imperfect anterior life. This is denied to Maggie because, as she discovers, such change is neither a quick nor a solitary process. The narrator's rhetorical strategy reinforces this: the passage, moving from the particular to the general, shows the broad perspective necessary to understand change.

Maggie shares this experience of frustration, and of being dwarfed against the world at large, with other protagonists of Eliot and Hardy. Maggie suffers for several reasons: her naive and impetuous temperament, her gender, and the ignorance of her provincial community. But others of different class or gender also suffer and fail. Gwendolen Harleth and Jude Fawley must accept failure, and the knowledge of their insignificance and impotence. Yet it is this failure which is instructive, as their struggles define the boundaries which limit them.

Eliot, as I have noted, preferred broad social perspectives to a focus on the individual. Daniel Cottom argues that she opposes a middle-class 'Realism' to a 'Romance' of individual desires, concluding that the "same supervision which identifies the individual as an utterly unique subject also pulverizes him into the most general of

abstractions" ("The Romance of George Eliot's Realism"). Her essay on Riehl, "The Natural History of German Life," published in the Westminster Review in July 1856, shows that even radical change must be gradual and organic[6]. Discussing Riehl's view of Europe as embodying "incarnate history," Eliot writes:

> What has grown up historically can only die out historically, by the gradual operation of necessary laws. The external conditions which society has inherited from the past are but the manifestation of inherited internal conditions in the human beings who compose it; the internal conditions and the external are related to each other as the organism and its medium, development can take place only by the gradual consentaneous development of both . . . As a necessary preliminary to a purely rational society, you must obtain purely rational men, free from the sweet and bitter prejudices of hereditary affection and antipathy; which is as easy as to get running streams without springs, or the leafy shade of the forest without the secular growth of trunk and branch. (Pinney 287)

The organicist metaphors imply that a certain kind of change is inevitable, and make it seem natural. The tone is abstract, following a model of scientific detachment emphasized by the choice of metaphor; the writer views humanity with the same objectivity with which she views nature. And, like nature, humanity changes according to laws, not whims.

The early part of the novel deals with Tom's and Maggie's educations, which are both characterized by misfortune and ignorance. While the narrative treatment unites Tom and Maggie by juxtaposition, and while the first book, "Boy and Girl," explicitly pairs them, much distinguishes the two educations. As Tom and Maggie share an identical social and economic background, it is easy to see how perceptions of gender influence their education. In Chapter 11 of Book 1, entitled "Maggie Tries to Run Away From her Shadow," Maggie Tulliver attempts to enact a fantasy in which she is embraced

by a band of gypsies and installed as their sage-like queen. Maggie's fantasy of social power at the gypsy camp, naive as it may be, conforms to profiles of female social power in the other novels of this study. Gwendolen Harleth, Grace Melbury, and Sue Bridehead are all seen as possessing an egregious social value. This confers a certain power on them, but it is a power which can only be exercized within set bounds. Maggie has nothing to offer the gypsies; what she values in herself is reduced to her father's relieved tip of five shillings to the gypsy man who leads her home.

When the gypsies fail to live up to Maggie's storybook preconceptions, she becomes frightened, hoping in continuing storybook fashion to be rescued by "Jack the Giantkiller, or Mr. Greatheart, or St. George." Having tried to gain a benevolent power over the gypsies through what she thinks is her superior knowledge, Maggie responds to disillusionment and growing fear with more fantasy. This confusion of inward fantasy with outward reality is compounded by the slap-dash, solitary way Maggie acquires knowledge:

> Maggie Tulliver, you perceive was by no means that well-trained , well-informed young person that a small female of eight or nine necessarily is in these days; she had only been to school a year at St. Ogg's, and had so few books that she sometimes read the dictionary; so that in travelling over her small mind you would have found the most unexpected ignorance as well as unexpected knowledge. (176)

This is a further illustration of the narrator's paradoxical relationship to the Tulliver children. Noone controls Maggie's education, but the omniscient narrator acts as putative mentor.

The narrator also intervenes to account for the muddled way Tom's education is

conducted. In Chapter 4 of Book 1, we learn that The Reverend Mr. Stelling is a teacher because that is the most convenient way for him to augment his income:

> Besides, how should Mr. Stelling be expected to know that education was a delicate and difficult business? any more than an animal endowed with a power of boring a hole through rock should be expected to have wide views on excavation. Mr. Stelling's faculties had been early trained to boring in a strait line, and he had no faculty to spare. But among Tom's contemporaries whose fathers cast their sons on clerical instruction to find them ignorant after many days, there were many far less lucky than Tom Tulliver. Education was almost entirely a matter of luck -- usually of ill-luck -- in those distant days. The state of mind in which you take a billiard cue or a dice-box in your hand is one of sober certainty compared with that of old-fashioned fathers, like Mr. Tulliver, when they selected a school or a tutor for their sons. (241)

For Maggie, the fluke of gender is added to "ill-luck." Tom's education is unsatisfactory because of the way in which things are done; Maggie's is unsatisfactory because nothing is done. Maggie wants to learn, but has no chance; Tom is going to learn whether he likes it or not.

That Tom's education is considered more important by his family is shown by its dominance in the narrative. The story of the Tullivers begins with this subject, and the second chapter of The Mill on the Floss opens with Mr. Tulliver declaring his resolution to get Tom an education. This, as Mr. Tulliver sees it, is to enable Tom to cope with the moral, legal and technical complexities of an increasingly "puzzling" world:

> 'What I want, you know,' said Mr. Tulliver, 'What I want, is to give Tom a good eddication: an eddication as'll be a bread to him. . . . But I should like Tom to be a bit of a scholard, so as he might be up to the tricks o' these fellows as talk fine and write wi' a flourish. It'ud be a help to me wi' these law-suits and arbitrations and things.' (56)

Mr. Tulliver sees "eddication" as a necessary tool for his son to fight the world on its own terms; it is a mixture of manner and matter, of style and hard factual knowledge. It is a

usable commodity.

But Mr. Tulliver remains puzzled by the world, and acts misguidedly upon his resolution. He has no experience educating young boys, though he knows his son must be different from himself: able, for one thing, to use language more fluently. In the absence of anyone better, Tulliver latches on to his friend and business acquaintance Riley, who provides spurious guidance, and acts as a kind of identifiable human end-product for the education envisaged for Tom: "'I wouldn't make a downright lawyer of the lad -- I should be sorry for him to be a raskill -- but a sort o' engineer, or a surveyor, or an auctioneer and vallyer, like Riley, or one o' them smartish businesses as are all profits and no outlay, only for a big watch-chain and a high stool" (56). Tulliver's own lack of education makes him incapable of shaping his son's education. His provincial pronunciation ("eddication," "scholard," "'Cademy"), his shaky command of written English, and his vague notion of Riley's profession all show his poor understanding of the world around him. Tulliver sees everything as personal, and his admiration for Riley, as well as his hopes for Tom, cohere around the personal animosity he feels for the lawyer Wakem: "Riley looks Lawyer Wakem i' the face as hard as one cat looks another. He's none frighted at him" (56). If the world is too puzzling for Tulliver, then he intends to see that education will make it less so for his son.

Yet Tom needs no education to understand the world. He is the only member of his family with the discipline to assert himself in the ways necessary for success. Part of the difference between Tom and his father is generational, but their difference of temperament is crucial. Tom Tulliver, as much as any character in this study, shows that

character is stronger than education. The education at Mr. Stelling's is useless, and provides Tom with neither enlightenment nor knowledge. The narrator tells us that Stelling's "lessons had left a deposit of vague, fragmentary, ineffectual notions." The education-by-rote fails; what Tom does learn comes to him when Stelling, encouraged by his success with Philip Wakem, "relaxe[s] the thumb screw." This allows Tom's empirical instinct to surface: "he went on contentedly enough, picking up a promiscuous education chiefly from things that were not education at all" (244). The benefits Tom gains at Stelling's come in spite of, not because of the education he receives there: "Nevertheless, there was a visible improvement in Tom under this training; perhaps because he was not a boy in the abstract existing solely to prove the evils of a mistaken education, but a boy made of flesh and blood, with dispositions not entirely at the mercy of circumstances" (244). This "improvement" is not intellectual; it is Tom's "bearing" which improves under the tutelage of the old soldier Mr. Poulter. The drill sessions, aimed at developing 'manly' or warlike qualities, provide Tom with something he can admire, in contrast to the book-learning for which he can see no purpose.

Tom always acts with a clear and uncomplicated purpose, but for once, at King's Lorton, this purpose is disrupted. He has always known what kind of man he wanted to be: "He was not going to be a snuffy schoolmaster -- he; but a substantial man, like his father, who used to go hunting when he was younger, and rode a capital black mare." At Stelling's, Tom is forced to learn things like Latin, and as Philip Wakem tells him, learning Latin is "part of the education of a gentleman." Tom, however, has no desire to become a gentleman. He wants to get on with the business of self-assertion, for which

education is irrelevant: "When people were grown up, he considered, nobody inquired about their writing and spelling: when he was a man, he should be master of everything and do just as he liked."

The definition of manhood is crucial to Tom, and explains why he cannot adapt to the world served by a classical education. The stay at Stelling's brings him into contact with two uncongenial males: Stelling and Philip, the first too 'masculine' for him, the second too 'feminine.' Stelling, "a broad-chested healthy man with the bearing of a gentleman," is a virile figure with a "true British determination to push his way in the world." Yet he is no mentor for Tom; instead, he proves to be a nemesis. The clergyman's "favourite metaphor" for the process of education is "that the classics and geometry constituted the culture of the mind which prepared it for the reception of any subsequent crop" (208). This ancient, agricultural metaphor is implicitly phallic, and shows Tom as the object of a process which he does not understand and for which he can see no purpose, and shows him for once in a passive, 'feminine' role.

Stelling's idea of masculinity is entwined with his bullish pedagogy. Latin and geometry are superfluous and impenetrable to Tom, but Stelling does not deviate to discuss their purpose: "Mr. Stelling was not the man to enfeeble and emasculate his pupil's mind by simplifying and explaining, or to reduce the tonic effect of etymology by mixing it with smattering, extraneous information such as is given to girls" (210). Explanation is too much like nurturing for Stelling: it is his job to provide information, and it is Tom's job to understand it. Stelling has a definite view of what Tom should be, and any mediation would compromise this. Tom, facing a powerful male authority

figure, is temporarily emasculated: "Yet, strange to say, under this vigorous treatment Tom became more like a girl than he had ever been in his life before" (210). Tom, whose "pride gave him something of the girl's susceptibility," temporarily surrenders his claims to masculinity. Like Maggie, he is submissive, and for once he genuinely misses her.

But this is an aberration, caused by a temporary loss of autonomy. One thing this education does, despite Tom's dislike of the curate, is to reinforce his notions of masculinity. Just as Tom's and Maggie's identities are defined by contrasts based on gender, so is Stelling's bluff manliness defined by a contrast with vapid and spoilt femininity, represented by his wife. Significantly, Tom dislikes Mrs. Stelling much more than he does her husband: "I am afraid he hated Mrs. Stelling, and contracted a lasting dislike to pale blond ringlets and broad plaits as directly associated with haughtiness of manner and a frequent reference to other people's 'duty'" (213).

Mrs. Stelling is the type of ornamental woman George Eliot so frequently complained of; she is an example of a middle-class woman educated in the superficial way that so incensed reformers like Emily Davies, Harriet Martineau, and Millicent Garrett Fawcett. Ostensibly, her domicile provides her with an ideal opportunity to exemplify the woman's sphere, but she is too shallow and self-centred to fill the altruistic spiritual role sketched out by Sarah Lewis and Sarah Ellis. The woman's sphere, in common with the debate about education and improvement, leaned heavily on idealizations, and ignored the often sordid human material that would have to implement its precepts. Mrs. Stelling embodies none of the virtues of women, or of the woman's sphere, and the time spent in her house teaches Tom to have no respect for middle-class

women.

Much as Tom misses Maggie while he is at King's Lorton, when she arrives she in turn suffers from this blanket humiliation of women. Stelling rationalizes away Maggie's quickness: "They can pick up a little of everything, I daresay . . . They've a great deal of superficial cleverness: but they couldn't go far into anything. They're quick and shallow" (220). This authorizes Tom's assumed superiority to Maggie:

> Tom, delighted with this verdict, telegraphed his triumph by wagging his head at Maggie behind Mr. Stelling's chair. As for Maggie, she had hardly ever been so mortified: she had been so proud to be called 'quick' all her little life, and now it appeared that this quickness was the brand of inferiority. It would have been better to be slow, like Tom." (221)

With Maggie this lesson has an uneven reception. Her visit is "a very happy fortnight": she is with her beloved Tom, and she enjoys sharing his studies. Initially, all this new information feeds her imagination:

> The astronomer who hated women generally caused her so much speculation that she one day asked Mr. Stelling if all astronomers hated women, or whether it was only this particular astronomer. But forestalling his answer, she said,
>
> "I suppose it's all astronomers: because, you know, they live up in high towers, and if the women came there, they might talk and hinder them from looking at the stars." (220)

This endears her to Stelling, who "liked her prattle immensely," but the message becomes personal when she is dismissed as "shallow" and "quick." Scorn from Tom teaches her the lesson of silence: "And Maggie was so oppressed by this dreadful destiny that she had no spirit for a retort." Although Maggie comprehends this knowledge much better than Tom, she learns that access to it depends on gender.

Tom, with no aptitude for this knowledge, finds it an impediment. His education

causes his relatives to misjudge him, and only throws into sharper relief his practicality. During "The Family Council," convened after Tulliver's ruination, Uncle Glegg delivers Bounderbyesque advice:

> " . . . we must look to see the good of all this schooling, as your father's sunk so much money in now.
>
> 'When land is gone and money spent
> Then learning is most excellent --'
>
> Now's the time, Tom, to let us see the good o' your learning. Let us see whether you can do better than I can, as have made my fortin without it. But I began wi' doing with little, you see: I could live on a basin o'porridge and a crust o' bread and cheese. But I doubt high living and high learning 'ull make it harder for you, young man, nor it was for me." (293)

Uncle Glegg voices the popular perception that education is effete and pampering[7]. Like Tulliver, Uncle Glegg judges education on its returns; for him it represents a use of resources and an investment, and he has no interest in education as an agent of moral, intellectual, or political improvement. The irony is that Tom is far more like the spartan Bounderby stereotype than uncle or aunt Glegg (or Bounderby himself, for that matter) could ever be. As the gleam vanishes from Tulliver's eyes, Tom supplants his father as head of the family, making decisions with firm acuity: "There were subjects, you perceive, on which Tom was much quicker than on the niceties of classical construction, or the relations of a mathematical demonstration" (307). His father wished to ensure that Tom could succeed in a "puzzling world"; Tom does succeed, but it is in spite of, and not because of his expensive education.

The fall of Tulliver foregrounds the economic imperatives at work on his children. It intensifies the prescriptions of class and gender by requiring action, and it prescribes the kinds of action that are acceptable. Tom has to unlearn his classical education before

he can prepare himself for an occupation. Maggie, by contrast, has no available occupation and remains dependent on her brother; a silent commodity, an investment which matures in marriage. Tom rejects the role of 'gentleman,' tying himself to the world of trade, but Maggie must counteract this, embracing the role of 'lady' in the purifying sanctity of the woman's sphere. Maggie cannot fill this purifying role, because of an excess, rather than a deficiency of capacity. The woman's sphere requires passivity as much as moral depth; Maggie is completely unfit for "the enforced idleness" that Millicent Garret Fawcett stigmatized as "one of the great curses of our society." Her frustration represents a wasted resource to her family and community.

As brother and sister, Tom's and Maggie's relationship is economic, and not the union of sympathy and spirit desired by Maggie and the narrator. Tom wishes to 'keep' Maggie, which requires her to remain economically, intellectually, and sexually inert: "I wished my sister to be a lady, and I would always have taken care of you, as my father desired, until you were well married"[8] (503). Maggie's independent wit, evident when she talks to Riley about her books, will encroach on the patriarchal domain if she marries: "It's no mischief while she's a littl'un, but an over 'cute woman's no better nor a long-tailed sheep -- she'll fetch none the bigger price for that" (60). Tulliver's vulgar transactional language shows how little space there is for Maggie to find fulfilment. As Wakem bluntly tells his son, a woman's primary function is to be secondary: "We don't ask what a woman does -- we ask whom she belongs to" (542). In the absence of Tulliver, Maggie 'belongs' to Tom.

The contrast of economic function between Tom and Maggie is established at the

beginning of the novel, in Tulliver's discussion with Riley about Tom's education. Even if Tulliver and Riley do not know what they are talking about, it is clear that education commodifies as it socializes. Maggie's options are juxtaposed with Tom's, setting the pattern of the novel which defines female capacity by default against male norms. After Maggie leaves, her father laments: "It's a pity but what she'd been the lad -- she'd ha' been a match for the lawyers, she would" (68). The education wasted on Tom could have benefitted Maggie; while Tom prospers when left at last to his own devices.

An undirected Maggie, however, is a dangerous Maggie. Tom has no interest in books, which makes ironic his father's wish that he gain command of the intricacies of language. He is concerned with the concrete, and has the knack of "laying hold o' things by the right handle." Maggie has an inconvenient interest in the generative, fictional powers of language, and rewrites her reading in a search for fulfilment and connection. But because noone in her community except Philip Wakem values reading, no attention is given to it. Maggie must read what she can find: a conglomeration of random influences gleaned from a polyglot collection of books "bought at Partridge's sale."

Maggie's reading is a matter of chance, as is her understanding of what she reads. She defends herself against Riley's criticism of The History of the Devil by pointing out the distance her imagination creates from the subject matter: "I know the reading in this book isn't pretty -- but I like the pictures, and I make stories to the pictures out of my own head, you know" (67). Maggie's involvement with language is solipsistic, and her reading consists of an affective absorption of texts. She has no contact with other minds, and her use of language hinders communication: she makes stories in her head rather than human

connections in the world.

Maggie, the "small mistake of nature," is cast off by a world in which she can find no place, and throughout the novel there is a looming shadow of death in the way she is presented. Maggie cuts what Eliot called the "threads of connection," and is effectively alone, as Nina Auerbach argues: "For Maggie's philosophical isolation, the fact that she has access to no ideology other than that of her family, is stressed again and again. Nor is the narrator able to provide one, for Maggie, or for us" (Romantic Imprisonment 239). For all her concern, even the narrator cannot protect Maggie, who journeys not toward knowledge, but death: "Instead of opening a window into spaciousness and coherence, Maggie's books become a mirror reflecting her own dark impulses. In fact, an examination of the world she sees in books provides us with a striking portrait of Maggie herself" (Romantic Imprisonment 239). Maggie's reading replicates but does not improve her character. She is an example of what happens to an unguided intelligence, and her fate emphasizes the difference in education between herself, and the narrator and readers.

Maggie's imagination does not atrophy, however, leaving her pliable and slow-witted like her mother. Instead she embraces the spirituality of a medieval monk. On reading Thomas a Kempis' The Imitation of Christ, she wanders into an intellectual and spiritual bog, thinking she has found a workable philosophy of submission. In following The Imitation of Christ, Maggie finds a mentor in the foremost teacher of western civilization: behind the reclusive selflessness of Thomas a Kempis lies the purifying selflessness of Christ. The image of Christ-as-teacher, however, is blurred by too many centuries, and by too many interpretive layers; by Maggie's strong emotional needs and

her ability to make "stories." Maggie is her own interpretive authority, and this jars badly with her random entrance into centuries of theology. If Christ was an unlettered outcast, he was backed by God, the omniscient mentor. Maggie pulls the Christian doctrine of self-denial inside out; her self finds expression through denial, and so effacement becomes assertion.

Thomas a Kempis fills a void for Maggie, giving her an imaginative outlet and a program for action. To this point, Maggie has seen no role to fill, and has had no-one to emulate[9]. Such examples of female power as exist -- aunts Glegg and Pullet, the gypsy matriarch, the bubble of condescension surrounding her cousin Lucy, the egocentric Mrs. Stelling -- are all unavailable or uncongenial. Maggie's life is centred on men, who influence her far more than the women she knows. This reliance on men is intellectual as well as emotional: "If she had been taught 'real learning and wisdom, such as great men knew,' she thought she should have held the secrets of life; if she had only books that she might learn for herself what wise men knew!" (379). Men possess the knowledge Maggie covets, and there is no 'feminine' knowledge available to her; its absence is so complete that she does not even seek such a thing.

The Imitation of Christ enables Maggie to combine 'masculine' knowledge with her 'feminine' impetus to submission. She stumbles upon Thomas a Kempis in a particularly bleak period following her father's loss, when she needs comfort which her old school books can no longer provide. Besides, Maggie had never found these satisfying: "Even at school she had often wished for books with more in them: everything she learned there seemed like the ends of long threads that snapped

immediately" (378.) Maggie looks for help in books written, and provided for her, by men. Initially she scours Tom's old school books, reading the Latin texts, Euclid, and Logic as "a considerable step in masculine wisdom -- in that knowledge which made men contented and even glad to live." The Imitation of Christ is in a pile of books given to her by the un-bookish Bob Jakin; this accident is typical of her haphazard education.

In the latter part of the novel, after her father's death, Maggie is pulled in conflicting directions by her ties to Tom, Philip, and Stephen. When Maggie returns from Miss Firniss's and stays at her cousin Lucy Deane's, she obtains Tom's permission to see Philip, but her relationship with Philip is prevented from running its course by the intrusion of Stephen Guest, a different kind of man entirely from both Philip and Tom.

We must address the issue of why Maggie becomes attracted to Stephen Guest, and why she behaves so differently because of him. The simple answer is that Stephen awakens Maggie's latent sexual passion. This offended nineteenth-century commentators on the novel, who were generally shocked at displays of sexuality -- especially female sexuality -- in fiction[10]. It should, however, be no surprise that the passionate Maggie has a strong sexual nature. Maggie is predisposed to desire, as her hunger for knowledge, and for connections with others show. When her sexual awakening occurs, Maggie cannot compartmentalize her personality. All feeling, knowledge and experience are bound together for Maggie, but it takes her until she has 'eloped' with Stephen to respond to her sexual passion in a way that is true to herself. The episode with Stephen appears to be a digression, but this is because Maggie's sexuality, ignored until now, can only express itself disruptively. Maggie's sexual initiation is part of the overall growth of her

personality, and is squarely in the novelistic tradition of informal education.

Eliot has prepared for this revelation of sexuality. Maggie's adolescent discovery of Thomas a Kempis is recounted with definite sexual overtones: "A strange thrill of awe passed through Maggie while she read . . ."; "Maggie drew a long breath and pushed her heavy hair back, as if to see a sudden vision more clearly" (383). Throughout the novel Maggie is described with careful physical detail, being likened to animals more than once. In this part of the novel, at age nineteen, she is shown as tall, strange, and strikingly beautiful, with dark hair and mysterious dark eyes that give her an exotic, alluring air. Regardless of her own feelings, she will become a focus of sexual attention for the men she is among.

This does not fully explain why Maggie responds to Stephen, however. Stephen, on the surface, is attractive enough, "a rather striking young man of five-and-twenty," tall, handsome, self-confident, and rich. Maggie's attraction to him cannot be based on affinity of temperament; it is all to do with receiving attention she has never received before. Stephen is a shallow character, spoilt and with no compulsion to self-discipline like most other characters in the novel. The narrative allows little space for the development of his character, which reinforces his shallowness. His role is functional, helping to reveal hidden parts of Maggie's personality, and helping to force the plot to closure by provoking Maggie to the sin of elopement, for which only her death can atone.

Stephen enters Maggie's life when she is vulnerable to temptation. It is hard for her to maintain her regime of self-denial, and while staying at Lucy's, Maggie experiences doubts: "Memory and imagination urged upon her a sense of privation too keen to let her

taste what was offered in the transient present: her future, she thought, was likely to be worse than her past, for after her years of contented renuciation, she had slipped back into desire and longing . . ." (482). Maggie has suppressed part of her nature for years, and must now confront this in a situation which adds new sexual and social dimensions to her struggle. Her introduction to "the young lady's life" has an "intoxicating effect on her after years of privation," and her first meeting with Stephen catches her unprepared: ". . . Maggie felt herself, for the first time in her life, receiving the tribute of a very deep blush and a very deep bow from a person towards whom she herself was conscious of timidity. This new experience was very agreeable to her -- so agreeable that it almost effaced her previous emotion about Philip" (484).

The unhappy accident of meeting Stephen, coupled with years of self-denial, elicits a sensual and indulgent reaction from Maggie. For the first time in her life, languor replaces ardour, and a dreamy passivity enslaves her. The language of the narrative, and the act of boating down the Floss with Stephen, link Maggie's relaxation of intensity to the persistent flood imagery, and prefigure her fate.

There are frequent references to Maggie surrendering her will, and these have a physical, as well as a moral dimension. Returning from a boating trip with Stephen and Lucy, Maggie slips as she gets out of the boat, and is steadied by Stephen. She is not embarrassed, and does not seek to re-assert her independence: "It was very charming to be taken care of in that kind graceful mannner by some one taller and stronger than oneself. Maggie had never felt just in the same way before" (492). Maggie simply experiences what is now happening to her. Her world has shown her no way to deal with

this kind of awakening, except avoidance and denial, and these are impossible now: "Maggie only felt that life was revealing something quite new to her, and she was absorbed in the direct, immediate experience, without any energy left for taking account of it, and reasoning about it" (516).

Despite the response of St. Oggs, and of contemporary readers, Maggie reacts in character to the affair with Stephen. She ultimately acts for what she sees as the good of others, and remains motivated by established ties. Although she cannot conform to the profile of passive, fragile femininity required by the woman's sphere, Maggie's vocation does involve supporting others, carrying out "social unproductive labour." Her greatest difficulty in renouncing Stephen is that she will hurt him, and that her actions have given her an obligation to him. She finally renounces him, because her ties to Tom, Philip, and Lucy are older, and more binding, but at all points she is primarily concerned with the effect her actions will have on others. The paradox of Maggie's ostracism by St. Oggs is that, while seen as a fallen woman, she is acting out what Eliot saw as woman's special moral function.

The castigation heaped upon Maggie for her involvement with Stephen is doubly unjust. For one thing, there is no physical act of love, and Maggie voluntarily rejects Stephen, to return to a hostile St. Oggs[11]. Just as importantly, Maggie is dealing with a natural, powerful sexual urge for the first time in her life. She has had no warning of this, and has no guidance, from women or men, as to how to deal with it. The episode with Stephen fits the general thwarting of Maggie's desire, and the general denial of self-expression. She cannot express herself intellectually and emotionally, and as she grows

older she can find no easy outlet for her sexual awakening. Maggie rejects Stephen because he represents only the sexual to her; to commit to him would be deny her real nature, which is bound up in long-term emotional ties. And although Maggie leaves Stephen out of subservience to others, this is an assertion of her independence. For her, marriage has never been a vocation, and she has never been able to compartmentalize her life and her desires as the ultra-conventional Lucy does. Stephen does not engage Maggie's thirst for knowledge, unlike her relationships with Tom and Philip.

Tom is not bookish, seeking practical knowledge, as opposed to the knowledge of the mind and heart which Maggie seeks. The contrasting importance given to the educations of Tom and Maggie is emphasized by the kinds of knowledge the two possess, with Tom's 'male' knowledge supplanting Maggie's knowledge, which is presented as inadequate. This links Maggie's 'knowledge envy' of male thinkers to her emotional subservience to Tom:

> [Tom] knew all about worms and fish and those things; and what birds were mischievous and how padlocks opened, and which way the handles of gates were to be lifted. Maggie thought this sort of knowledge was very wonderful -- much more difficult than remembering what was in the books; and she was rather in awe of Tom's superiority, for he was the only person who called her knowledge 'stuff' and did not feel surprised at her cleverness. Tom, indeed, was of opinion that Maggie was a silly little thing: all girls were silly -- they couldn't throw a stone so as to hit anything, couldn't do anything with a pocket-knife, and were frightened at frogs. Still he was very fond of his sister, and meant always to take care of her, make her his housekeeper, and punish her when she did wrong. (92)

The shift from Maggie's to Tom's point of view reflects the dominance of masculine perceptions in Maggie's life. The passage provides a cross-section of the relationship between the Tulliver siblings: it encompasses the belittling of female intellect and

knowledge, which is validated for Tom at Stelling's; and it reinforces Tom's patriarchal 'right' to control Maggie, and her obligation to comply with all this.

Catherine Belsey has written of the "hierarchy of subjectivities" in the nineteenth-century realist novel. The narrator validates this hierarchy from the position of ultimate rhetorical power at the top of the narrative chain. In The Mill on the Floss the narrator must use all her privileges of omniscience and control to bend the relationship of Tom and Maggie Tulliver into the shape she requires. They must be shown as soul-mates, but also as contrasting yet complementary siblings divided by the exigencies of a cruel and ignorant world. Their interdependence is emphasized by the ending, which unites them with an intensity shown to this point only by Maggie and the narrator. Tom and Maggie finish the novel not as they have been, but as the narrator would have them: accepting each other as the final bounds of their desire. This ending cuts off any possibility of Tom and Maggie 'improving' themselves, be it intellectually, economically, or in terms of social status.

Nevertheless, the anomaly of the narrator remains. The narrator has a close relationship to the world of the Tullivers, as well as a close relationship to the feminine straitening experienced by Maggie. It is not, as some critics have argued, that the narrator is "immasculated," a mouthpiece for patriarchal platitudes. The narrator's generalized rhetoric is the mechanism used to achieve distance from the acutely local, and acutely feminine, experience of Maggie Tulliver. The narrator knows of the existence of two worlds: that of the Tullivers and St. Oggs, and that of the urbanized and educated readership for whom she writes, and she apologizes to the reader at length for the

parochialism of St. Oggs. Yet Maggie, inarticulately yearning for experience beyond the immediate, reveals a psychological bond with the narrator.

The narrator, with God-like control, is the final power to which the characters must defer. Maggie, who throughout is looking for a mentor, and for someone to whom she can submit, says to Philip: "But, dear Philip, I think we are only like children, that some one who is wiser is taking care of. Is it not right to resign ourselves entirely, whatever may be denied us? I have found peace in that for the last two or three years -- even joy in subduing my own will" (427). Maggie's fatalistic impetus to submission and self-denial is justified; it is an acute reading of the narrator's foreclosure of her quest for fulfilment.

The narrator's control of Maggie's destiny, and the dilution of a potential feminist message in the text reflects, as I suggest earlier, Eliot's own tentative approach to the Woman Question. She felt that this question was very complex in itself, and her way of dealing with this complexity was to subsume it into her vision of interdependence between the sexes, and between the classes. A letter to Mrs. Nassau John Senior on 4th. October 1869 shows her characteristic caution on this topic:

> I feel too deeply the difficult complications that beset every measure likely to affect the position of women who have to put themselves forward in connection with such measures to give any practical adhesion to them. There is no subject on which I am more inclined ti hold my peace and learn, than on the Woman Question. It seems to me to overhang abysses, of which prostitution is not the worst. Conclusions seem easy so long as we keep large blinkers on and look in the direction of our own private path.

This shows some alarmism, but it is also a product of Eliot's intellectual rigour. Eliot is less guilty of reaction, than of a justifiable fear of rashness and partisanship.

By suppressing the desires of the protagonists, and by identifying with the novel's urbanized readership, the narrator inverts the trend towards improvement and wider access. The thwarting of Maggie's impulse to self-improvement represents a greater limitation imposed on a woman attempting to overcome the drawbacks of the ideology of the woman's sphere. The narrator herself exemplifies the palliative tendencies of woman-as-moderator, when she rationalizes Tom's harsh judgement of Maggie: "Tom, like every one of us, was imprisoned within the limits of his own nature, and his education had simply glided over him, and left a slight deposit of polish. If you are inclined to be severe on his severity, remember that the responsibility of tolerance lies with those who have the wider vision" (630). The educations of Tom and Maggie Tulliver are foredoomed, and brother and sister are shown to be at the mercy of character, and of circumstance. But by presenting them and their world as anterior and limited, the narrator heightens the impression that she and her readership exist above and beyond the world of the novel. By exploiting the sense of detachment from the narrated events that is available to both narrator and reader, Eliot implies that the only way to understand and control change is to be separate from it.

The privileging of narrator and readers over ill-educated protagonists causes contradictions in The Mill on the Floss. Character remains destiny for Tom and Maggie, and Eliot flouts her belief in gradual, "little by little" change by killing them off with a sudden, random, act of violence. As there is no enlightened system of education to improve them, they are sealed off behind the barrier of death in order to preserve their integrity. The narrator's attempt, which follows Eliot's reading of Riehl, to treat the

Tullivers and St. Oggs as an historical case-study, creates too much distance from the subject matter. Tom and Maggie are so different from us, and so helpless, that we can feel sorry for them, but we cannot see the organic links between them and ourselves. They are so sharply drawn as individuals, that they can only be accomodated to "the wider vision" by the loss of detail that comes with great distance.

CHAPTER I NOTES

[1]Marianne Hirsch observes that "Even the broadest definitions of the Bildungsroman presuppose a range of social options available only to men" (7). Hirsch argues that "the female developmental plot," embodying "revisions" of the initial form, do occur; the important point for this study, is that such "revisions" had not yet evolved. Referring to The Mill on the Floss, Jane McDonnell implies that Eliot made the task harder than it might have been for Maggie:

> The Bildungsroman is clearly a genre that might permit a woman writer to explore her own subjectivity or autonomy in the person of her heroine, yet Eliot chooses, in this semi-autobiographical work, cultural definitions of her heroine that conflict with her own sense of self. (379)

[2]Eliot's pronouncements on female education often showed her concern with feminine frivolity. In her essay on Fuller and Wollstonecraft, she writes that "A really cultured woman, like a really cultured man, will be ready to yield in trifles." Ina Taylor, whose biography creates an unflattering picture of a self-serving and increasingly conservative Eliot, claims that her resistance to involvement in reform was marshalled around the notion that women were, in important ways, inherently inadequate:

> Her earlier experience in the provinces had convinced her that women were interested only in ephemeral subjects and not likely to use their vote wisely. Since then she had seen nothing in the conduct of women in the metropolis to make her change her mind. The same sense of pettiness prevailed everywhere, she said, and women did not deserve the franchise. (188)

If this is true, it shows that Eliot held out little hope for education to improve the conditions or the behaviour of women.

[3]Barbara Hardy also identifies gender as a determining factor: "The heroines of George Eliot's novels . . . all share the 'ex officio' disability of being women. . . . The woman's disability, like the inferior chances of the Poor Man or the Younger Son of folk-tale, provides the handicap" (47). And, as Martha Vicinus argues, the whole direction of development for mid-Victorian women pointed towards limitation: "All her education was to bring out her "natural" submission to authority and innate maternal instincts" (Suffer and be Still x).

[4]Graham Martin, citing Colin McCabe, observes that a defining characteristic of the "classic realist text" is that "It presents a hierarchy of discourses capped by a meta-language which both settles for the reader the relative weight of all other discourses and at the same time conceals its own nature as a discourse" (Smith 36). This is comparable to what Daniel Cottom calls the narrator's "supervision."

[5]This is also a technique the narrator employs to deal with change. It is worth recalling Raymond Williams' analysis here:

> . . . though George Eliot restores the real inhabitants of rural England to their places in what had been a socially selective landscape, she does not get much further than restoring them as a landscape. They begin to talk, as it were collectively, in what middle-class critics still foolishly call a kind of chorus, a 'ballad element.' But as themselves they are still only socially present, and can emerge into personal consciousness only through externally formulated attitudes and ideas. (The Country and the City 168)

Williams explains this by referring to the restrictions the novel, a form inherently concerned with moral conduct, placed upon the delineation of such a past.

[6]The affinity Eliot felt with Riehl's work can be seen from one of her own notes to the essay: "Throughout this article, in our statement of Riehl's opinions, we must be understood, not as quoting Riehl, but as interpreting and illustrating him" (Pinney 287).

[7]Jude Fawley encounters this attitude in Jude the Obscure, from Arabella, and from his aunt's neighbours. Tom Tulliver is subjected to hostile scrutiny by his uncle Deane: "On the whole, this list of acquirements gave him a sort of repulsion towards poor Tom" (313). There is a powerful element of inverted snobbery in this attitude, as Mr. Deane's comments to Tom show: " . . . you've had a sort of learning that's all very well for a young fellow like our Mr. Stephen Guest, who'll have nothing to do but sign cheques all his life, and may as well have Latin inside his head as any other sort of stuffing" (314). This is a middle-class attitude, making a virtue out of the commercial activities scorned by the aristocracy. There is also a strong reinforcement of the gender hierarchy: for men of Tom's class, certain knowledge and occupations are not 'manly.'

[8]This, of course, is a conflict which the young Marian Evans had to face. As an unmarried woman, the respectable option for her after her father's death would have been to live under Isaac's roof. Martha Vicinus, addressing the issue of unmarried women, points to the prevalent view

> . . . that the training to become a wife and mother gave a lady all that was necessary in moral precepts and, after all, she would surely become a helpful aunt in a brother's home. Unfortunately, the problem was not moral but economic. Everywhere there was evidence that not all women could find places at their brother's hearthsides. (Suffer and be Still xii)

[9]Judith Lowder Newton discusses Maggie's dearth of options, and explains what she identifies as "the material and ideological sources of dependency on men." Maggie is caught in a double-bind:

> Eliot makes clear, for example, that Maggie's resistance to the powerlessness and insignificance of the feminine role, her rebellions against it, and her fantasies of power cut her off from the affection and approval of women, for it is the role of women in the novel, as in life, to impose on female children the very restrictions against which Maggie most rebels. (145)

It is worth emphasizing again that the very act of seeking knowledge separates Maggie from women, and ties her to men.

[10]In her appendix, "The Placing of Stephen Guest," in the Penguin edition, A. S. Byatt cites Swinburne, Leslie Stephen, and F. R. Leavis, all to the effect that Stephen is not worthy of Maggie, or of his creator. Swinburne, in 1877, fumed that "a woman of Maggie Tulliver's kind can be moved to any sense but that of bitter disgust by a thing -- I will not write, a man of Stephen Guest's [sic] . . . " Leslie Stephen, in the Cornhill Magazine in 1881, blamed Eliot for being blind to Stephen's vapidity:

> The unlucky affair with Stephen Guest is simply indefensible. . . . We are forced to suppose that George Eliot did not see what a poor creature she has really drawn. Perhaps this is characteristic of a certain feminine incapacity for drawing really masculine heroes . . .

F. R. Leavis' argument in The Great Tradition (1948) shared Swinburne's and Leslie Stephen's complaint that Eliot failed to see Stephen Guest for what he was. Byatt argues that Eliot was aware of Stephen's limitations, and emphasizes the differences between Eliot and Maggie. She notes something that other readers of the novel have missed, that "Stephen in love, whilst remaining Stephen, is no longer the ludicrous being who is Stephen playing with Lucy's scissors and spaniel."

[11]Maggie's false elopement with Stephen on the Floss can be likened to the night that Sue Bridehead spends in Jude Fawley's company in Jude the Obscure. Sue's failure to return to the training college at Melchester is entirely due to the accident of missing a train. A similar mixture of gossip and moral inflexibility greets Sue and Jude on their return, although the immediate consequences are less severe than they are for Maggie.

CHAPTER II

DANIEL DERONDA: "AFFECTIONS CLAD WITH KNOWLEDGE"

"It is not likely that any perfect plan for educating women can soon be found, for we are very far from having found a perfect plan for educating men." (George Eliot)

" 'I am not talking about reality, mamma,' said Gwendolen, impatiently." (Daniel Deronda 85)

George Eliot saw education as a process of moral improvement, in which the needs and desires of the individual were subordinate to the overall goal of the improvement of society. Education, for Eliot, was not a means of self-fulfilment, or a means of acquiring skills and knowledge that would lead to economic gain, but a way to enable the individual to contribute to the progress of the community. While Eliot's view of education was distinctive, it shared much with the philosophies of commentators such as T. H. Huxley, John Stuart Mill, and Matthew Arnold. These were all, like Eliot, concerned with education as a means of moral and social regeneration, and like Eliot, they resisted the impetus for education to be merely vocational training, directed towards economic gain. Long before she wrote Daniel Deronda (1876), and some years before her first novel, The Mill on the Floss (1860), Eliot described education as a process of moral improvement in a review article on Thomas Carlyle:

> It has been said that the highest aim in education is analogous to the highest aim in mathematics, namely, to obtain not results but powers, not particular solutions, but the means by which endless solutions may be wrought. He is the most effective educator who aims less at perfecting specific acquirements than at producing that mental condition which renders acquirements easy, and leads to their useful application; who does not seek to make his pupils moral

> by enjoining particular courses of action, but by bringing into activity the feelings and sympathies that must issue in noble action. ("Thomas Carlyle" The Leader, 27 October 1855)

Daniel Deronda embodies a vision of 'moral' education in which the protagonists learn to commit themselves to 'noble action.' This involves difficult personal growth for hero and heroine: Gwendolen Harleth must learn humility, and selflessness; Daniel Deronda, long badgered for support by a frenetic Gwendolen, must overcome an inbred anti-semitism when he discovers his own Jewishness[1]. For both hero and heroine, 'noble action' requires a submersion of identity in the needs of others.

My concern in this chapter is with the narrator's management of these processes of change in Gwendolen Harleth and Daniel Deronda. Eliot believed strongly in the didactic powers of novels, and in Daniel Deronda she uses the voice of the narrator to manage the reader's reaction to the differing experiences of Gwendolen and Deronda. Deronda is poorly drawn as a realistic character, yet the narrator persistently advocates him as an ideal. Gwendolen, much more interesting and successful by the standards of conventional realism, is singled out for a drastic and humiliating transformation. The contrast between the narrative treatment of these two, a result of Eliot's didactic agenda, places a burden of explanation and apology on the narrator. The narrator of Daniel Deronda responds to this demand by blending erudition with confidentiality, by exploiting the discursive, essay-like propensities of the novel, and by frequent use of the second-person pronoun. These strategies, which present the narrator as respectable and knowledgeable, attempt to convince the reader of the fairness and objectivity of the text.

Gwendolen, like Maggie Tulliver in The Mill on the Floss, suffers a harsher

treatment in the narrative than any other character (with the possible exception of Lydia Glasher.) The weight of judgement falling on her is out of all proportion to anything Deronda endures, and this reflects Eliot's view that women should carry a heavier moral burden than men in the task of improving society. With this in mind, it is possible to read Gwendolen's transformation as a normalizing process. She loses her 'individuality' in order to help nurture a communal morality, not only within the novel, but also as an example for the novel's readers, who were of course mainly women. She can be all the more instructive because of her typicality, something which The Examiner of 2nd. September 1876 noted: "There must be hundreds of girls more or less like Gwendolen among George Eliot's readers, and the exposure of her shallow frivolous aims is meant to make them ashamed of themselves, and to lift them into a higher conception of their duties and destinies." Bonnie Zimmerman develops the idea of Gwendolen as an example, arguing that she is a sounding-board for George Eliot's qualms about female assertiveness:

> By 1876, I would suggest, Eliot feared that too many women were making poor choices and needed a clear example of where the unbridled desire for transcendence might lead. She thus created her most rebellious and egoistic heroine, her most dreadful punishment, and her most rigorous renunciation to illustrate how serious had become the problem of women's needs and duties. (Smith 197)

Feminists at this time accepted distinctions between men and women that have since been questioned, and Eliot's attitude to feminism, while queasy, was not totally idiosyncratic. It shared many of the contradictions of contemporary feminists, who accepted that women had a distinct role within marriage, and within society. Zimmerman

points out that Eliot was worried that changes in the role of women might hinder the 'moral evolution' of the human race, and quotes a letter Eliot wrote to Sara Hennell: ". . . nothing can outweigh to my mind the heavy desecration of family ties . . . One trembles to think how easily that moral wealth may be lost which it has been the work of ages to produce, in the refinement and differencing of the affectionate relations" (Letters V: 56). Eliot feared reform that was not grounded in historical continuity, and she felt that young women like Gwendolen were an unnatural development, and that they needed correction.

Gwendolen's education has consisted of acquiring superficial 'accomplishments,' and it has prepared her for a secondary, ephemeral role. She has, in common with the contemporary trend to which Eliot reacted so negatively, a strong sense of self-assertion, and a willingness to act, even if clumsily, on her own behalf. The egotism and inconsequentiality conflict with Eliot's vision of "high seriousness," and with her wish that women and men should share a "common store of knowledge." Maggie Tulliver sought this communion in The Mill on the Floss, and it was an integral part of life for Eliot herself. A letter to Sara Hennell, written in May 1858, shows that Eliot's desire for equality of knowledge between women and men often expressed itself in scathing recriminations against feminine frivolity:

> It is quite an exception to meet with a woman who seems to expect any sort of companionship from the men and I shudder at the sight of a woman in society, for I know I shall have to sit on the sofa with her all the evening listening to her stupidities, while the men on the other side of the table are discussing all the subjects I care to hear about.

In this letter, Eliot's frustration expresses itself in bitter attack on feminine inconsequence.

Eliot longs for the company and conversation of the men, and she exempts them from the tart language used on the women. This pattern is repeated in Eliot's novels, and it is clear in Daniel Deronda. Gwendolen is brusquely cut down to size, and supplicates Deronda, attempting to emulate him intellectually. In shedding her egotism and her vanity, and in acquiring the beginnings of a selfless moral conscience, she has become more like Maggie Tulliver, and more like George Eliot.

Beginning 'in medias res,' Daniel Deronda immediately sets in motion contrasting processes of change for hero and heroine. Deronda is characterized by "reflective hesitation"; Gwendolen, by instinctive, wilful self-importance: "In Gwendolen's mind it had been taken for granted that she knew she was admirable." Deronda's criticism in the opening section causes Gwendolen, for the first time in her life, to question herself. She is thus immediately placed under Deronda's influence, and starts to become more like him even before her own character has been fully established for the reader.

Deronda, by contrast, is no stranger to introspection. We see him, reading Sismondi's History of the Italian Republics at age thirteen, becoming confused because "the popes and cardinals always had so many nephews." Learning from his tutor that this is a euphemism for their own sons, Deronda makes a painful connection between this fact and his own unclear relationship to his guardian, Sir Hugo Mallinger.

This episode is our first detailed contact with Deronda, and is our only extended look at his childhood. It is a formative occasion, which the narrator generalizes as a classic type of character-formation-in-action: "It is in such experiences of boyhood or girlhood, while elders are debating whether most education lies in science or literature,

that the main lines of character are laid down" (210). This observation gains force because it occurs while Deronda is receiving formal instruction; it shows that personal experience takes precedence over academic, textual knowledge. The other novels in this study, even though they deal much more closely with formal education than Daniel Deronda, also privilege character formation over strictly intellectual development.

In Gwendolen's case, the opening words of the narrative undercut her complacency before it has even been established. The words are Deronda's, but appear to be the narrator's, until the second paragraph reveals otherwise. Deronda is immediately associated with the supervision of Gwendolen, in a way that duplicates the narrator's overview, and blurs the gap between narrator and hero. This act of judgement characterizes Gwendolen as sinister and dangerous, as in need of correction:

> Was she beautiful or not beautiful? and what was the secret of form or expression which gave the dynamic quality to her glance? Was the good or the evil genius dominant in those beams? Probably the evil, else why was the effect that of unrest rather than of undisturbed charm? Why was the wish to look again felt as coercion and not as a longing in which the whole being consents? (35)

This opening scene is highly visual, with the arresting Gwendolen centre-stage, and all seems set for her to captivate Deronda. Anything but this happens, however, as the narrative assiduously avoids following up on the implied romantic involvement between the two. The language of this first paragraph switches, after the initial phrase, to metaphysical speculation. Deronda is disturbed by Gwendolen's moral aura, and not by her physical presence. Although Gwendolen is drawn romantically to Deronda later on, there is no indication that Deronda sees anything of value in her. It is a further emphasis

of the contrast between the two, and a further punishment for Gwendolen that she is not substantial enough to attract Deronda.

Gwendolen, with a strong will, as well as social position, can find no vocation except marriage. Deronda, naturally bright but lacking focus and ambition, vaguely excluded by "something about his birth which threw him out of the class of gentlemen," can meander for several years until, miraculously, the chance to follow a significant vocation comes looking for him. Yet the narrator does not take up the feminist cudgel on behalf of Gwendolen: her censure betrays a strong stake in Gwendolen's humiliation, just as the equivalent idealization of Deronda pushes him beyond realism and into allegory[2].

It is tempting to typecast Gwendolen, in the early part of the novel, as sexually manipulative. This is only part of the story: as soon becomes evident, Gwendolen is not that dangerous. In a family lacking a male provider, she responds to financial disaster by attempting the male role of economic action: she fails, and marries Grandcourt[3].

Deronda, while heir to an enviable range of masculine privilege, is shown to have a sensitivity not normally associated with men, and notably lacking in other Eliot heroes such as Adam Bede, Tom Tulliver and Felix Holt[4]. The description of his boyhood reminds us of Maggie Tulliver: "He had not lived with other boys, and his mind showed the same blending of child's ignorance with surprising knowledge which is oftener seen in bright girls" (205). He remains an untypical mixture as a young man, "moved by an affectionateness such as we are apt to call feminine, disposing him to yield in ordinary details, while he had a certain inflexibility of judgement, an independence of opinion, held to be rightfully masculine" (367). It is as if Eliot, drawing Gwendolen as the kind of

woman she despised, set about purging her of all that she disliked, while in painting her ideal picture of a sensitized man, she infused Deronda with all the qualities she felt men lacked.

Eliot's switching of stereotypical male and female qualities between hero and heroine, and Gwendolen's later petitioning of Deronda can be seen as attempts to point to, if not quite to bridge, the gap that Eliot saw between men and women. This is a recurrent theme in her novels. In The Mill on the Floss, Eliot had tried in a very different manner to unite Tom and Maggie Tulliver. In Daniel Deronda, the hero aspires to the normally female role of sacrifice and service, and the heroine aspires to the intellectual accomplishments of the hero.

Gwendolen travels the standard novelistic journey towards self-knowledge, but she does not win the rewards of fulfilment and happiness. Like Deronda, she can at first be fickle: "What she was clear upon was, that she did not wish to lead the same sort of life as ordinary young ladies did; but what she was not clear upon was, how she should set about leading any other, and what were the particular acts which she would assert her freedom by doing" (83). Initially, Gwendolen has nothing to do. Like Deronda she has no occupation, and enjoys "perfect freedom from the sordid need of income." She has been schooled in "doing as one likes" (variations of Arnold's phrase from Culture and Anarchy are applied to her throughout the novel). Her education defines her Philistinism:

> With regard to her lot hitherto, she held herself rather hardly dealt with, but as to her 'education' she would have admitted that it had left her under no disadvantages. In the schoolroom her quick mind had taken readily that strong starch of unexplained rules and disconnected facts which saves ignorance from any painful sense of limpness; and what remained of all

> things knowable, she was conscious of being sufficiently acquainted with through novels, plays, and poems. About her French and music, the two justifying accomplishments of a young lady, she felt no ground for uneasiness; and when to all these qualifications, negative and positive, we add the spontaneous sense of capability some happy persons are born with, so that any subject they turn attention to impresses them with their own power of forming a correct judgment on it, who can wonder if Gwendolen felt ready to manage her own destiny? (69)

Gwendolen fails the novelistic imperative to "know thyself," and confuses self-satisfaction with achievement. Her lack of knowledge and skills parallels her moral vacuity.

All this must be undone for Gwendolen to grow morally. The novel begins with criticism by Deronda and the narrator, and continues with the loss of the family income. This event shapes Gwendolen's future, but the agents of the pain it causes are particular people who wound the heroine where she is vulnerable -- by withholding their approval. Gwendolen has already been piqued by the purism of Klesmer when he judged her singing. Her request for an opinion involves an assessment of her character, and of her ability to survive in the world. Klesmer's diagnosis cuts through to this:

> "You are a beautiful young lady -- you have been brought up in ease -- you have done what you would -- you have not said to yourself, 'I must know this exactly,' 'I must understand this exactly,' 'I must do this exactly' -- in uttering these three terrible musts, Klesmer lifted up three long fingers in succession. "In sum, you have not been called upon to be anything but a charming young lady, whom it is an impoliteness to find fault with." (297)

Klesmer's criticism is more gallant than the snide pot-shots of the narrator, but it is accurate. The musician recognizes that Gwendolen's only career so far has been 'doing as she likes,' and he harps on her lack of discipline: "You would find -- after your education in doing things slackly for one-and-twenty years -- great difficulties in study: you would

find mortifications in the treatment you would get when you presented yourself on the footing of skill" (303).

Klesmer's criticism of Gwendolen's formal education initiates her informal education. Gwendolen has approached someone openly for the first time in her life, and the lesson in humiliation is an epoch for her: " . . . this first experience of being taken on some other ground than that of her social rank and her beauty was becoming bitter to her" (300): "His words had really bitten into her self-confidence and turned it into the pain of a bleeding wound; and the idea of presenting herself before other judges was now poisoned with the dread that they might also be harsh: they also would not recognize the talent she was conscious of" (305). The interview with Klesmer is a fall from innocence for Gwendolen, a negative epiphany which shows that her future will consist of shrinking opportunities, of discipline, and of self-denial.

Shocks such as these also occur to Maggie Tulliver and Jude Fawley. Maggie is disappointed with the gypsies' failure to recognize her inherent power, and she is humiliated by Riley and Stelling, who both heap scorn upon the mere thought of her having an active mind. Jude is also disappointed more than once. His delusions suffer a blow when he opens a Latin grammar, to find out the mass of information required to learn a language. A more serious deflation comes when he recieves the curt letter from the Master of Bibbliol College, which abruptly shows his hopes to be futile. These epiphanies of disappointment show the protagonists the social and economic obstacles they confront, obstacles which in each case remain insurmountable.

Gwendolen plans to avoid dependency by resurrecting her chances of marriage to

Henleigh Grandcourt, believing this will give her a new kind of power. It removes her family's financial difficulties, but Gwendolen's confidence in her ability to control Grandcourt shows that she overestimates her own capabilities. Grandcourt teaches Gwendolen that she is powerless. This is a personal lesson, but it also clarifies the constraints she faces as a woman, and this results in Gwendolen's increased sympathy for her mother. Mrs. Davilow is a touchstone of brow-beaten feminine submissiveness, scoffed at by Gwendolen before her own sufferings. But Mrs. Davilow has learnt the lessons of experience, and it is unfortunate that she lacks the persuasive powers to warn Gwendolen. Gwendolen has the illusion that her own judgement is reliable, and of consequence, while it is neither. Her vision of the future, too, is vague:

> That she was to be married some time or other she would have felt obliged to admit; and that her marriage would not be of a middling kind, such as most girls were contented with, she felt quietly, unargumentatively sure. But her thoughts never dwelt on marriage as the fulfilment of her ambition; the dramas in which she imagined herself a heroine were not wrought up to that close. (68)

Gwendolen refuses to confront the issue of marriage. She does not see herself as a social being, but as a "princess in exile" who must only wait for a congenial future to arrive: " . . . but Gwendolen's confidence lay chiefly in herself. She felt well equipped for the mastery of life."

Gwendolen's assumption of easy "mastery," of her ability to fill a masculine role of dominance, ignores two mechanisms of power wielded by men. These are money and sex, and Gwendolen has no real experience of either. She knows enough of her family's economic dependence to recognize the need to act, but she has no power to do anything.

And marriage may be the vocation for a young woman, but Gwendolen's sexual ignorance makes it hard for her to choose a marriage partner. Her sexual power is of an inexperienced kind, and while effective on a youngster like Rex Gascoigne, it does not work on Grandcourt. Grandcourt, fifteen or more years her senior, is sexually experienced to the point of jadedness. He has spent his passion earlier, in his affair with Lydia Glasher, whom he has now discarded; his interest in Gwendolen is not sexual, but centres on his ability to control and humiliate her.

Gwendolen loses her sexual innocence on the evening of her marriage-day, but not in the physical sense. Reading Lydia Glasher's letter, she suddenly comprehends her husband's inhumanity. She does not have the level of sexual influence she had expected to wield over Grandcourt, whose interest in her is, beneath the observed forms of courtship, only minimally romantic: "It was to be supposed of him that he would put up with nothing less than the best in outward equipment, wife included; and the bride was what he might be expected to choose" (458). Lydia Glasher's letter is another negative epiphany for Gwendolen, in one hysterical instant replacing the notion of marriage as a zenith of fulfilment, with the knowledge of the oppression and sexual exploitation it too often contains. And Grandcourt's only reaction to Gwendolen's "new repulsion" is to make subtle shifts in his tactics of repression:

> He judged that he had not married a simpleton unable to perceive the impossibility of escape, or to see alternative evils: he had married a girl who had spirit and pride enough not to make a fool of herself by forfeiting all the advantages of a position which had attracted her; and if she wanted pregnant hints to help her in making up her mind properly he would take care not to withhold them. (479)

The marriage marks the point at which the narrator becomes more sympathetic towards her heroine. Gwendolen starts learning to be more like George Eliot's ideal of ardent servitude, and now all the previous hostility towards the bratty 'girl of the period' can be channelled through Grandcourt, who becomes a chastising surrogate, allowing the narrator to switch to a supportive role in the moral regeneration of the heroine.

As she learns, Gwendolen becomes increasingly humanized, and this is reflected in the language used to desribe her. Her previous inability to appraise herself 'realistically' coincided with descriptions of her as unreal, or as not fully human. Her frustration at the small circumstances of her life is likened to an unthinking, animal friskiness: "Imagine a young race-horse in the paddock among untrimmed ponies and patient hacks" (54). She is more than once desribed as "a princess in exile," implying a figure from romance who neither acts nor changes, but who simply waits and is valued as a spectacular possession. The narrator decribes her as "this problematic sylph," and "this young witch," denying her individuality behind pre-realistic archetypes. Gambling at Leubronn, she is "a Nereid," she has "a sort of Lamia beauty," and in the words of one hostile female observer, who uses imagery that will later be liberally applied to Grandcourt, Gwendolen "has got herself up as a sort of serpent now, all green and silver, and winds her neck about a little more than usual" (40). In the early books, Gwendolen is likened to figures from mythology. At the Brackenshaw Park archery meeting, the pre-eminent Gwendolen "seemed a Calypso among her nymphs"; elsewhere Sir Hugo Mallinger remarks on her as "An uncommonly fine girl, a perfect Diana."[5]

Yet it cannot be convincingly argued that Gwendolen grows into a supportive

role. For one thing, her character undergoes revolution, as opposed to evolution. She is too unregenerate to begin with; we see no undeveloped powers of empathy and sacrifice. Change is provoked by external, dramatic, even violent events. Her loss of fortune, her awareness of Grandcourt's mastery, and Grandcourt's drowning all occur suddenly; two of these three are also accidental. Is it any surprise that Gwendolen is humbled after all this, and revises her whole manner of behaviour? She has little alternative.

Formally, it is Daniel Deronda who is the agent of this change[6]. Recent critics have focussed on the relationship between Daniel and Gwendolen, noting that the reluctance with which both characters approach each other contributes to the awkwardness of the novel. Barry Qualls comments that "George Eliot, then, in the harsh light of her portrayal of Philistia, gives us as much of the language and situations of romance within Gwendolen's "unmapped" self as she does on the surface of Deronda's history" (Bloom 215). The exchange and growth is two-way, for Deronda as the unwilling mentor must learn to provide support when it is asked for: "As in Bunyan's dream, the mind has been the place of Deronda's spiritual education through the agency of Gwendolen's suffering" (215). Her new role is thrust upon her, and she needs the assistance of a man before she can fill it, as Catherine Belsey observes: "Gwendolen's own rudimentary moral consciousness enables her to profit from her mistakes, but she needs the help of Daniel Deronda, whose sensibility is a finer one" (Widdowson 124). Bonnie Zimmerman discusses Gwendolen as the subject of change: "The agent of change is Daniel Deronda, and we must seriously question the adequacy of his advice. Given the narrow distance between Deronda and his creator, we must also question Eliot's message

to women of her time" (Smith 212). This is a valid point, warning us not to swallow the didactic authority of the realist text. A claim made by Martin Price, that "Gwendolen is pathetic in her self-assertion, but Deronda's difficulty lies in his lack of trust in a self," indicates the disparity between heroine and hero, and the difficulty in depicting a relationship between two characters who embody different literary modes (Bloom 223).

The problem with Deronda is therefore emphasized by the realistic form of the novel. He appears to follow standard trajectories of character growth, with his guardian, Sir Hugo, showing concern for his growth as a gentleman, and for his choice of an appropriate career. Deronda's enforced help of Gwendolen provides the basis for moral enlightenment through self-sacrifice and self-examination. His rescue of Mirah provides him with further opportunity for benevolence, and with a love interest. (Deronda's unconvincing courtship of Mirah is another example of how disengaged he is from the standard realistic flow of the novel). In taking over Mordecai's mantle, he assumes a vocation, and in the process overcomes prejudice and resistance within himself. Yet while all this is necessary for a realistic hero, Deronda does not change in the usual fashion. Where Jude Fawley and Maggie Tulliver are incapable of character change because of their psychological intractability, Daniel Deronda is like Grace Melbury, in that he is incapable of change because of a formal intractability[7].

Deronda's formal education is by far the most successful and complete of any character in this study, but this demonstrates nothing at all convincing about the powers of education to transform and develop. Unlike any other character under discussion here, Deronda has combined privileges of class and gender. In addition to the fuzziness of his

character in the narrative, the process of education is conducted largely 'off-stage.' This begs all questions about how education may have changed him.

Deronda is not introduced in direct detail until late in the second book. Here we are given some of his history, as we would expect with a realistic hero. Yet even this section reinforces the tenuous air of his character. It does not deal in the kind of vivid childhood anecdote which is so evocative in The Mill on the Floss, for example. The one childhood episode described, with Mr. Fraser, centres on a cerebral response to a text. Neither does the view we have of Deronda as a young man make him more distinct. Sir Hugo's vagueness, very different to Deronda's, increases this effect by providing no clear guidelines, nothing even to chafe against: "Whatever your inclination leads to, my boy"; "From what I see and hear, I should think you can take up anything you like": " . . . you need not take up anything against the grain. You will have a bachelor's income -- enough for you to look about with" (215). Deronda, as the ward of a baronet, does not have to worry about details of career planning. Sir Hugo, warning Deronda about the danger of academic excesses, advances his own idea of education as a general preparation: "What I wish you to get is a passport in life. I don't go against our university system: we want a little disinterested culture to make head against cotton and capital, especially in the House" (216).

The parody of Arnold in Sir Hugo's comment emphasizes the fact that Deronda is a type of 'alien,' someone who is not bound to a particular class, activity, or body of knowledge. Sir Hugo's plea also shows, again in parody, that valuing 'liberal' as opposed to 'useful' knowledge is often a function of social privilege. Deronda has "a meditative

yearning after wide knowledge," a "boyish love of universal history," and lacks the single-mindedness necessary for concrete worldly success: " 'Deronda would have been first-rate if he had had more ambition' -- was a frequent remark about him." Seen by his peers as an endearing weakness, this immaterialism is what marks him out for favourable treatment by the narrator. It is also what makes him so unconvincing as a realistic character.

For the reader to know Deronda at all, the narrator has to intervene, showing the psychology and motivations of a character that does not reveal itself through action. Deronda is not so much a character looking to discover himself, as a character seeking an appropriate medium to articulate what he is. The focus on internal psychology and cognition with Deronda foreshadows the concerns of modernism; it is also typically Victorian in the way it is concerned with the purpose and the social results of learning:

> He was ceasing to care for knowledge -- he had no ambition for practice -- unless they could both be gathered up into one current with his emotions; and he dreaded, as if it were a dwelling-place of lost souls, that dead anatomy of culture which turns the universe into a mere ceaseless answer to queries, and knows not everything, but everything else about everything -- as if one should be ignorant of nothing concerning the scent of violets except the scent itself for which one had no nostril. (413)

The massive proliferation of detail in the nineteenth century has to be organized, but for Deronda this must involve more than simple categorization. Knowledge must be integrated into the social and spiritual fabric of human life, and learning must be a nurturing process. Even where a formal body of knowledge has to be learnt in Daniel Deronda, this is not done by a solitary scholar, but in a partnership which is more important than the acquisition of knowledge itself. Deronda's biggest triumph at Oxford

is his self-sacrifice on behalf of Hans Meyrick. His own learning process, under the tutelage of Mordecai, requires the study of Jewish texts and history, but it is important because of the metaphysical union between the two men.

Deronda's mentorship of Gwendolen is an extreme of 'informal' education, as it consists almost entirely of moral advice. The earlier problem that faced Gwendolen, of earning a living, has been conveniently finessed by Grandcourt's death and his subsequent legacy. This leaves Gwendolen free to ignore the acquisition of any kind of 'useful' knowledge, and to concentrate on developing her mind and her spirit.

Deronda tells Gwendolen that the way to transcend her problems is essentially by religious retreat. She needs to become educated traditionally, in that she must read and study, but the context of this study is all-important. Gwendolen, in the early part of the novel no kind of a reader, becomes an autodidact in an attempt to close the gap of understanding between herself and Deronda. What she reads is determined largely by chance, and is undirected as, like Maggie Tulliver, Dorothea Brooke and Romola, she sets out to emulate her own perception of a superior masculine mind:

> . . . when she was safe from observation [she] carried up a miscellaneous selection -- Descartes, Bacon, Locke, Butler, Burke, Guizot -- knowing, as a clever young lady of education, that these authors were ornaments of mankind, feeling sure that Deronda had read them, and hoping that by dipping into them all in succession, with her rapid understanding she might get a point of view nearer his level. (608)

Deronda cannot give Gwendolen specific advice. She must change in herself, and must learn that suffering carries its own meaning to those who are enlightened. What he tells her at one point has the value that it is at least consistent with Deronda's own behaviour:

> The refuge you are needing from personal trouble is the higher, the religious life, which holds an enthusiasm for something more than our own appetites and vanities. The few may find themselves in it simply by an elevation of feeling; but for those of us who have to struggle for our wisdom, the higher life must be a region in which the affections are clad with knowledge. (508)

Deronda, however, is too reluctant to be a satisfactory mentor for Gwendolen. She learns because she has the desire to, and in spite of rather than because of Deronda.

Most commentators have noted, in one way or another, that Deronda is an ineffective realistic character. A review of the serialized novel observed that ". . . Daniel Deronda runs the risk of appearing at the end as little more than a wreath of moral mist, -- a mere tentative, or rather group of tentatives, in character-conceiving, which the author may find it exceedingly difficult to crystallize into a distinct form" (The Spectator 10 June 1876). Robert Louis Stevenson dismissed him as "the Prince of Prigs"; to Pulcheria, in Henry James' "Daniel Deronda: A Conversation," he was "A lay father-confessor. Dreadful." This echoes Zimmerman's criticism that Deronda, despite all the paraphernalia of authority and wisdom, actually says little that means anything. Patricia Beer takes this one stage further, undercutting the empirical authority of Deronda's pronouncements: "The advice he gives [Gwendolen] in the course of the story amounts to little more than a few gnomic platitudes about matters he has not experienced himself" (206). Rachel Brownstein, who examines the novel from the point of view of Gwendolen's growth, acknowledges that "Deronda is famously a failure as a credible character in fiction," adding that "For all his ideal quality Deronda is not without appeal to the female erotic imagination; indeed, I think he is, precisely, a figure of feminine fantasy" (Bloom 232).

The attitude women in the novel display towards Deronda illustrates this. The Meyrick girls, who remain demurely confined inside their house with their mother, openly characterize him as a fantasy figure: "They so thoroughly accepted Deronda as an ideal, that when he was gone the youngest set to work, under the criticism of the two elder girls, to paint him as Prince Camaralzaman" (224). Gwendolen's transformation hinges on her own idealization of Deronda:

> There was not the faintest touch of coquetry in the attitude of her mind towards him: he was unique to her among men, because he had impressed her as being not her admirer but her superior: in some mysterious way he was becoming a part of her conscience, as one woman whose nature is an object of reverential belief may become a new conscience to a man. (468)

Following the narrator, these women create their own Deronda, mirroring fantasies in him in a way that is comparable to the construction of female characters, such as Grace Melbury or Tess Durbeyfield, in Hardy's novels. This investment by Eliot's narrator and her female characters is less sexual than its counterpart in Hardy; Deronda is a synthesis of moral, physical and emotional factors. He says to Gwendolen: " . . . but generally in all deep affections the objects are a mixture -- half persons and half ideas -- sentiments and affections flow together" (470). Deronda himself is 'half person and half idea'; a disembodied, semi-allegorical figure who moves uneasily but influentially amongst others who are more solid realistic creations.

Deronda preserves this role in his encounter with his mother. The Princess Halm-Eberstein rejects the emotional profile forced upon her, and refuses to place her ideal outside herself, in the shape of a man. She has defined herself by actions which run dramatically against what is expected of her. The purpose of her meetings with Deronda -

- to convey information, to explain -- run counter to the expectation that she should attempt to establish an emotional bond with her son. The Princess' story is educative because of the difference it reveals: "Every woman is supposed to have the same set of motives, or else to be a monster. I am not a monster, but I have not felt exactly what other women feel -- or say they feel, for fear of being thought unlike others" (691). Deronda and his mother are counterparts in the narrative and moral balance of the novel. Deronda tells his mother that "What I have been trying to do for fifteen years is to have some understanding of those who differ from myself" (692). In his mother, Deronda meets someone radically unlike himself; the Princess performs her motherly duty of teaching, or at least trying to teach, her son, but she does so in a manner more characteristic of a father. She confronts her son, attempting painfully, and against her inclination, to breach a gap created by years of misunderstanding and non-communication. It is worth noting that for this gap to have grown between the Princess and her son, she has had to be physically absent for his entire life. It is as if she could not modify the character of motherhood, without destroying it. Deronda's mother has rejected these constraints, not just because she wished 'to follow a career' or to 'be independent,' but because they are contrary to her nature, a nature which differs from Deronda's in its clarity and hardness, in the way it is displayed in actions that have binding consequences.

This meeting raises questions about gender, opportunity and empathy. It is easy to forget the cameo role the Princess plays, and to follow Deronda and his mediating sympathy for the rest of the novel. But the princess is a sharp reminder of the reality and harshness of social constraint. Gaps cannot be bridged by sympathy alone, and Deronda's

mother is the only person to challenge him with this immutable fact: "You are not a woman. You may try -- but you can never imagine what it is to have a man's force of genius in you, and yet to suffer the slavery of being a girl" (694). The princess' experience has been of denial, frustration, and thwarted ambition; Deronda cannot know what it is to be a woman, but his mother can use her experience to teach him equivalent lessons of pain. She presents her son with one incontrovertible fact: she will not see him again. All Daniel's empathy and introspection are useless in the face of physical absence; his mother has taught him a little of what it is like to be a woman, powerless in the face of others' decisions:

> But to Deronda's nature the moment was cruel: it made the filial yearning of his life a disappointed pilgrimage to a shrine where there were no longer the symbols of sacredness. It seemed that all the woman lacking in her was present in him as he said, with some tremor in his voice -- 'Then we are to part, and I never to be anything to you?' (723)

This moment is an epoch for Deronda, a further example in the novel of painful learning initiated by the failure of a relationship to nurture and support. Deronda's "filial journey," his quest for empathy and identity, ends with his mother's refusal to compromise what she sees as her her own destiny and identity. This quest, however, is replaced by a more expansive vocation, as Deronda's knowledge of his Jewishness, coupled with his guardianship of the documents bequeathed by his grandfather, finally provides him with identity and purpose.

Deronda's Jewishness moves his section of the plot towards closure. A new maturity of purpose -- indicating full integration of character -- coincides with a convenient tying-up of loose ends in his life. All aspects of Deronda's life come together

at once: psychological, intellectual, emotional, spiritual, vocational, and sexual. Deronda's first meeting with Mordecai and Mirah upon his return to England profoundly bonds all three:

> The two men clasped hands with a movement that seemed part of the flash from Mordecai's eyes, and passed through Mirah like an electric shock. But Deronda went on without pause, speaking from Mordecai's mind as much as from his own --
>
> 'We have the same people. Our souls have the same vocation. We shall not be separated by life or death.' (817)

Everything bespeaks unity and integration: Deronda is described as "enjoying one of those rare moments when our yearnings and our acts can be completely one, and the real we behold is our ideal good" (817). The one obstacle to Deronda's intimacy with Mordecai -- a lingering, uneasy anti-semitism -- is removed.

Similarly, the one obstacle to romantic union with Mirah is removed. The discovery of his Jewishness is particularly germane to Deronda's love for Mirah, a problem he had pondered on his journey home: "To astonish a woman by turning into her lover when she has been thinking of you merely as a Lord Chancellor is what a man naturally shrinks from: he is anxious to create an easier transition" (814). The "electric shock" figuratively applied to Mirah can be likened to a thrill of sexual awareness: she is now able to move into the romantic centre of Deronda's life, a centre previously occupied in surrogate by Mordecai and Gwendolen. (Whether or not we are convinced on Mirah's part is another issue: all is sacrificed here to the integration of the hero.)

Although Deronda's mission is now defined, it avoids the narrowness of detail. It is a form of 'noble action,' a form of ardent, sacrificial servitude typical of Eliot's novels.

Deronda has found a vocation, not just a job, or even just a career: "Since I began to read and know, I have always longed for some ideal task, in which I might feel myself the heart and brain of a multitude -- some social captainship, which would come to me as a duty, and not be striven for as a personal prize" (819).

If Deronda represents a forced 'happy' ending, then Gwendolen embodies a forced 'unhappy' ending. The hierarchy of fortunes between hero and heroine is reflected further in the hierarchy of narrative importance, especially towards the end of the novel, which foregrounds the denouement of Deronda's strand of the plot. Gwendolen's transformation is not rendered in close detail; it is initiated by a series of traumas, and the genesis of her new life is revealed through the agency of Deronda, during the meeting when Deronda tells her of his plans to leave for Palestine, and to marry Mirah.

Gwendolen is not only subordinated to Deronda in terms of narrative importance; her whole development and future are dependent on Deronda. Her earlier self-absorption is thrown into diminished perspective by Deronda, who embodies the transcendent expansiveness of 'noble action.' We are told that Deronda is about to embark on a life of self-abnegation; but we feel much more acutely the changes Gwendolen has undergone, as her previous self-centredness is now fully inverted: "The world seemed getting larger around poor Gwendolen, and she more solitary and helpless in its midst" (875). Gwendolen sees her own concerns measured against Deronda's pan-historical mission, and she experiences another of the negative epiphanies which mark her development. On a more acutely personal note, she loses the friendship and support of Deronda, as well as any possibility of a romantic union with him. The hysteria this provokes is painful, but

brief, and marks a new beginning for Gwendolen.

A letter to Deronda on his wedding-day is Gwendolen's last act in the novel. Gwendolen, who once relied wholly on her physical appearance for making an impression, is now expressing herself in writing, and this forms a counterpart to the spectacle of the opening scene at Leubronn. Her self-denial, and the suppression of her earlier vivacious personality link her to other Eliot heroines, such as Maggie Tulliver, Dorothea Brooke, and Dinah Morris:

> Do not think of me sorrowfully on your wedding-day. I have remembered your words -- that I may live to be one of the best of women, who make others glad that they were born. I do not yet see how that can be, but you know better than I. If it ever comes true, it will be because you helped me. I only thought of myself, and I made you grieve. It hurts me now to think of your grief. You must not grieve any more for me. It is better -- it shall be better with me because I have known you. (882)

At the conclusion, the hero and heroine have both undergone an informal education; both have gained powers of discernment, self-knowledge, and sacrifice. It is the formal management of these changes which preserves a difference. Daniel Deronda leaves England, and even though the final paragraphs of the novel are devoted to him, more questions surround Gwendolen, who remains behind. Deronda moves beyond the world of the novel; Gwendolen, despite the narrator's attempt to relegate her to a postscript, has a far greater mimetic urgency. It is easy to let the ethereal hero sail off into the sunset; it is much harder to dismiss the tensions and uncertainties of a heroine barely in her twenties.

We are left with many unanswered questions about Gwendolen as the novel ends. The inconclusiveness of her situation reminds us of Dorothea at the close of

Middlemarch; more than is usual with realistic novels, we are interested to see how these women would act and develop in the future. In leaving her heroines in unresolved tension, Eliot mirrors her own tentativeness and reservations about the role of women.

There are two other reasons why it is difficult to see a clear future for Gwendolen. She is, after Grandcourt's legacy, free from economic want, and as an upper-middle class widow, faces the problem that there is no obvious, active role open to her. It seems unlikely that she will be interested in re-marrying: an important part of her moral education is that she now shrinks from sexuality, which she once frivolously and ignorantly exploited. The problematic nature of Gwendolen's change does not make it easy for us to project a future for her, either. Gwendolen has evolved from a caricature into a paragon, from anathema to heroine, and the technical maneuverings needed to achieve this have their price. Gwendolen has been managed and interpreted by a hostile narrator, but more importantly by the elusive mediation of Deronda. Her metamorphosis, vague and ill-defined, is supervised by the vague and ill-defined hero. With the departure of Deronda for the middle-east, Gwendolen is stranded too far from the narrator, who has no basis for further interaction with her heroine.

Gwendolen's uncertain situation at the novel's end can be linked to the intensity with which Eliot approached moral and social issues. Eliot, to paraphrase a cliche, was concerned with the means rather than just the end. She saw education as integral to our deepest humanity, and not as a purely material transaction. She commented that: "I believe -- and I want it to be well shown -- that a more thorough education will tend to do away with the odious vulgarity of our notions about functions and employment, and to

propagate the true gospel that the deepest disgrace is to insist on doing work for which we are unfit -- to do work of any sort badly" (Letters IV: 525). This passage makes no distinction of gender, but in Daniel Deronda Eliot could not avoid treating her hero and heroine differently. Deronda, at the expense of realism and credibility, conforms to Eliot's wish. Gwendolen has been educated into the moral sensitivity, and the selflessness of which Eliot approves, but we see no clear outlet for these qualities, at the same time as we feel the poignant loneliness of Gwendolen's situation. Eliot's social vision espoused a cooperative union between the sexes, based on common intellectual property. But the education of Gwendolen, even though the heroine tries to see it as a bonding process, has her dependent on the mentorship of Deronda. This relationship, essentially patriarchal, is unequal, actually requiring little investment beyond time from Deronda. It leaves Gwendolen with greater self-knowledge, but as a woman, it does not provide her with an easy or obvious way to use this, to her own or to others' advantage.

One more quotation from Eliot's letters will help set Gwendolen's plight in context. Recognizing the danger of over-emphasizing the traditional feminine qualities she valued, Eliot wrote to a friend:

> We women are always in danger of living too exclusively in the affections; and though our affections are perhaps the best gift we have, we ought also to have our share of the more independent life -- some joy in things for their own sake. It is piteous to see the helplessness of sweet women when their affections are disappointed -- because all their teaching has been, that they can only delight in study of any kind for the sake of a personal love. They have never contemplated an independent delight in ideas as an experience which they could confess without being laughed at. Yet surely women need this sort of defence against passionate affliction even more than men. (Letters V: 106)

At the close of Daniel Deronda, Gwendolen is trapped in a disappointment of the affections. From a selfish coquette, she has changed into an intelligent, morally sensitive young woman. But Gwendolen has no "share of the more independent life." That is reserved for the male protagonist, Daniel Deronda. Eliot's novel shows that its author's wish, that equality of education might close the gap of understanding and opportunity between men and women, was still just that: a wish.

CHAPTER II NOTES

[1]Deronda, characterized throughout by his receptivity, is tested fully by Mordecai. As he tells his mother, when she questions him about turning himself into "a Jew like" his grandfather: "That is impossible. The effect of my education can never be done away with. The Christian sympathies in which my mind was reared can never die out of me" (724).

[2]In Catherine Belsey's words, "The conjunction of empiricism and idealism collapses," and the reader is unsure how to relate to or evaluate characters (Widdowson 126).

[3]This feminist underpinning is important to the novel, even though it is downplayed in the text. Catherine Belsey writes that "I want to read Daniel Deronda as the history of an impossible resistance . . ." (Widdowson 131); Bonnie Zimmerman recognizes that " . . . the refusal to acknowledge male authority lies at the core of Gwendolen's being" (Smith 210).

[4]Patricia Beer comments on this:

> It is not just that George Eliot's male characters are less significant than her female characters. They are unsympathetic, in a collective way which underlines their differing superficial characteristics. They are particularly unsympathetic in their attitude to women . . . (206)

[5]This hunting imagery encroaches on the 'realistic' subject of Gwendolen's future, however. The archery meet, and the hunts, with Rex Gascoigne's proposition and the flirtations with Grandcourt, are charged with sexual possibility, but also expose Gwendolen to "her fear of being directly made love to." And in a comment that ignores the mythical and sexual connotations of the hunt in favour of its social importance, Gwendolen's Uncle Gascoigne upbraids her for her unladlylike recklessness: "When you are married, it will be different: you may do whatever your husband sanctions. But if you intend to hunt, you must marry a man who can keep horses" (109). Gwendolen deals with this contradiction as she deals with all contradictions: by withdrawing from debate and retreating within her own idealized conception of her future.

[6]Leslie Stephen commented tersely in Cornhill Magazine of February 1881 that "It is not hard to say which is George Eliot's favourite theme. We may call it the woman in need of a confessor."

[7]Rachel Brownstein, reading the novel as a Bildungsroman, shows the extent to which Deronda conforms to a standard realistic character profile:

> The assumptions that underlie the narative are the assumptions of psychoanalysis . . . Deronda's story is about finding his true self, his identity

and his vocation; he does so after discovering the truth about his origins in an encounter with his rejecting mother. (Bloom 211)

CHAPTER III

"THE WOODLANDERS" AND GRACE MELBURY'S 'HIGH PERUSING LIFE.'

"All persons who have thoughtfully compared class with class -- and the wider their experience the more pronounced their opinion -- are convinced that education has as yet but little broken or modified the waves of human impulse on which deeds and words depend." (Thomas Hardy, "The Profitable Reading of Fiction.")

" . . . the free spontaneous play of consciousness with which culture tries to float our stock habits of thinking and acting, is by its very nature, as has been said, disinterested." (Matthew Arnold, Culture and Anarchy.)

Herbert Spencer commented in his Education (1861) that "Education has for its object the formation of character." A typical nineteenth-century observation, this shows an axiomatic faith in education as a means of transformation, of progress, and of improvement. Thomas Hardy's The Woodlanders (1887) fits into the pattern of this study in that it contradicts this assertion. To refer to the etymology of the word, education can 'draw forth' what is in a character; it can develop and enhance, and it can change consciousness and heighten awareness. The Woodlanders shows education doing all this, but it also shows education failing to change inherent character traits, and by extension, failing to change what Hardy saw as the inherently tragic nature of human relationships.

The Woodlanders examines the socially transformative powers of education through the experience of Grace Melbury. Grace is the daughter of a prosperous timber-merchant in the tiny, secluded Wessex hamlet of Little Hintock. She is sent away from her home to be educated in a fashionable London school. The education she receives prepares her for a life radically unlike the one she leaves behind; the plot, however, is

driven by the fact that she must return home after her education is completed. Her education is intended to raise her in social class, and to exploit her attractions as a woman; it gives her new expectations, but it does not enable her to realize these.

Grace shares this social impotence with Maggie Tulliver, with Gwendolen Harleth, and with Jude Fawley and Sue Bridehead. What is distinctive about Grace -- more so than with the less fully-realized Sue Bridehead -- is that she is a female protagonist in a novel written by a male author. This adds an elusive spin to discussions of character in The Woodlanders, and means that, even more than elsewhere in this study, narrative management cannot be separated off as a technical issue.

The narrator in The Woodlanders is distanced from Grace by class and gender, yet his empathy for her allows him to tell her story. Like Eliot's narrator in The Mill on the Floss, Hardy's narrator in The Woodlanders has a seemingly omniscient view of a range of social experience, and aligns himself with his educated readership rather than with the rustics of whom he writes. Yet he must have an intimate knowledge of rural life in order to write about it in such detail[1]. This dual knowledge, of rustic "customary life," and of educated urban life, is shared by Grace, who finally leaves Hintock when Fitzpiers acquires an "important practice" in the Midlands.

Grace is susceptible to different narrative objectification than a male character. Other female characters of Hardy's -- most strikingly, Tess Durbeyfield -- are sexually objectified more than Grace. But Tess is much more substantial than Grace, who does or says little to define herself, leaving a vaccuum to be filled by others' preconceptions. Grace's education, intended to increase her marriageability, causes her to lose her social

and geographical anchor-points. Unfortunately, she remains economically dependent on her father, and is unable to re-define herself by her own actions.

The relationship between education and character is developed by contrasting Grace Melbury with Marty South. Marty is a plain, uneducated young woman who competes with Grace for the affections of Giles Winterborne. Marty remains sexually submissive, and ignored, whereas the more attractive Grace learns to manipulate her sexual power. Implicit in this contrast is a moral judgement: Marty is selfless, and devoted to preserving the memory of Giles, while Grace becomes coquettish, and commits herself to the unfaithful Edred Fitzpiers.

Marty South is a touchstone for Grace in other ways. Marty is, and always will be, one of the woodlanders, a Wordsworthian rustic who must work hard and with her hands; she must remain close to the productive capacities of the land on which she lives. Grace's education takes her away from physical labour, but this removal from the material processes of the life she grew up with leaves a void of character, identity and purpose. There is no organic character development or intellectual growth in Grace's education, which affects a radical disjuncture by wrenching the young girl out of her social context, and re-forming her to an alien model. Marty remains part of the class and community into which she is born: her isolation and diffidence, and her prescribed role in life, help her to achieve a level of self-knowledge impossible to Grace.

Language and speech provide the basis for a further contrast between Grace and Marty. As female characters, neither has easy access to self-expression. The introverted Marty retains her rural dialect; there is nothing to make her lose it. She comes to terms

with her inarticulateness, and with being overlooked. Grace's speech changes with her education, and this change is more than a shift in her accent, and more than an increase in vocabulary and fluency. The subject matter of Grace's discourse changes, and the mere fact that, as a woman, she has the power to articulate, dislocates her from familiar social and sexual roles.

Grace's dislocation illustrates several points made in the Introduction. Raymond Williams described the way Hardy, and Eliot, focussed on the psychological costs of social mobility; we see an example of this in Grace's confusion, and in her alienation from her childhood world. The experience of dislocation is repeated throughout the novels I discuss. Jude Fawley and Sue Bridehead fall into the same pattern as Grace, and their eloquence and impractical expectations make them anomalies in their worlds. Maggie Tulliver's intellectual and spiritual ardour gives her too keen a consciousness for the pragmatic world of St. Oggs. Even Daniel Deronda, always oddly detached from the world of his novel, only finds fulfilment through emigration.

The relationship between language and culture is central to the novel, as it was to the notion of 'improvement.' Raymond Williams discussed the "idiom" of Eliot's and Hardy's fiction in relation to class mobility; writing more recently, and within a fuller materialist analysis, George Wotton has proposed that language is central to the process of alienation:

> The imposed uniformity of a common language was one of the ways by which the dominant class sought to establish its hegemony. By establishing a system of education which suppressed the dialects of the working people which were expressive of their different existential conditions, it sought to give its own ideology a 'classless,' eternal and universal character. This

> ideological domination appears in Hardy's writing as the repressing of the distinctive and the particular, a transformation in which the Self literally becomes hidden beneath the 'veneer of education.' (72)

Grace Melbury is an example of this: she is, even less than other Hardy figures, a knowable character with a discrete 'self.' Grace's 'character' is never clear, and this threatens to finesse any discussion of how she is changed by education.

Grace's education, which takes place at a fashionable London school, is designed to help her marry into a higher social class; it is not empowering in the way that education for men was meant to be. The nineteenth-century movement for female education did, however, seek to empower women, although it first had to define female character and potential. Emily Davies asserted in The Higher Education of Women (1866) "that the object of female education is to produce women of the best and highest type," and immediately recognized the vagueness of this statement, and the enormity of "the terrible question, What is the best and highest type of woman?"

One quick answer to this would be: "Definitely not the kind of woman portrayed by Thomas Hardy." It is a commonplace that Hardy's depiction of women has always been a problem: a source of annoyance, of hope, of amusement, or of revulsion. As George Wotton shows, it has also been a reliable source of verbiage. This is not surprising, as Hardy consistently portrayed women as abstractions. Rosalind Miles, in an essay entitled "The Women of Wessex," recognizes Hardy's obsession with women, adding that "He was always in love." Miles cites a note Hardy made while a young man in London: "Walked about by moonlight in the evening. Wondered what woman, if any, I should be thinking about in five years time." Miles provides a list of the women Hardy

mused over during his long life, and reminds us of the airiness of his obsessions: "The theme of the lost prize, the unknown beloved, to which the commentators on Hardy so frequently revert, is perhaps to be connected less with Tryphena [Sparks, his cousin] than with some insatiable desire to apprehend the romance of womanhood, womanliness, the female" (Smith 24). Against this idealization of the mystery of womanhood, his work showed women facing problems that were often larger than those faced by men. There is a dilemma in Hardy's presentation of women, one that derives from a mixture of sympathy and fantasy-projection[2].

Contemporary responses to Hardy's early novels bear this out. Elaine Showalter, in her essay "The Unmanning of the Mayor of Casterbridge," records that there was some uncertainty at first as to whether Hardy was male or female. Far From the Madding Crowd (1874) was at one point attributed to George Eliot. Showalter reminds us that Hardy knew a lot about "The Woman Question," and that he gave support to a number of the 'minor' women novelists of his day. Yet Edmund Gosse, a good friend of Hardy, wrote in The Speaker in 1890 that "The unpopularity of Mr. Hardy's novels among women is a curious phenomenon. If he had no male admirers, he could almost cease to exist . . . Even educated women approach him with hesitation and prejudice." Sympathetic as Hardy's portrayal of women may have been, it was structured by a sense of woman as the "Other." This was linked to Hardy's view (a view less misogynistic than nihilistic) that women's destinies were biologically determined because "the unalterable laws of nature are based upon a wrong," a wrong that made women "the weaker sex."[3]

This is obvious the first time Grace appears. (She is talked about at length

beforehand, and this indirect presentation emphasizes how she is shaped by the perceptions of others.) Marty South, in Sherton Abbas square, saw "a flexible young creature in whom she perceived the features of her she had known as Miss Grace Melbury, but now looking refined to much above her former level" (77). The narrator continues:

> It would have been difficult to describe Grace Melbury with precision, either then or at any time. Nay, from the highest point of view, to precisely describe a human being, the focus of a universe, how impossible! But apart from transcendentalism, there never probably lived a person who was in herself more completely a 'reductio ad absurdum' of attempts to appraise a woman, even externally, by items of face and figure.
>
> Speaking generally it may be said that she was sometimes beautiful, at other times not beautiful, according to the state of her health and spirits. (78)

The narrator plays a game of now-you-see-her-now-you-don't with Grace: "What people therefore saw of her in a cursory view was very little; in truth, mainly something that was not she. The woman herself was a conjectural creature who had little to do with the outlines presented to Sherton eyes" (79). This tells us more about the narrator than about Grace: after all, how much can we know of someone we see walking across the street, if we ignore body language, dress, facial expression, and focus instead on metaphysical abstractions? This passage underlines Grace's narrative vulnerability, indicating how she is a repository for others' desires and speculations[4].

It is with the natives of Little Hintock -- those she has grown away from -- that we see the 'new' Grace thrown into relief, highlighting the dislocation caused by her education. Her first meeting is with Giles, who picks her up from Sherton Abbas upon her return. This is anything but an innocent meeting, as Giles was her childhood

sweetheart, and is now the man her father reluctantly intends to 'give' her to. The conversation on the ride home is strained, as Grace reveals that she has forgotten most of what she once knew about rural life. Her education has entailed a loss of memory, and of identity, and what was once commonplace to her is now strange: ". . . the fact at present was merely this, that where he was seeing John-apples and farm-buildings, she was beholding a much contrasting scene: a broad lawn in the fashionable suburb of a fast city . . ." (83). Winterborne, unsure of his relationship to the Melbury family, and especially to Grace, addresses her stiltedly as 'Miss Melbury.' Grace, her thoughts elsewhere, deflects his attempts at confidence: "It was true; cultivation had so far advanced in the soil of Miss Melbury's mind as to lead her to talk of anything save of that which she knew well, and had the greatest interest in developing: herself. She had fallen from the good old Hintock ways" (84). The comment is the narrator's -- Giles would not be capable of the irony of the last sentence -- but it expresses Giles' thoughts, and these are representative of the Hintock community.

Grace Melbury is not an easy character to assess, however. The realistic qualities she does possess -- diffidence and passivity, for example -- do not help us to read her as a conventional character. She does not initiate anything, or actually do very much. Her character is not revealed in action: this creates a void that can be misleadingly filled by others, while it makes it hard to assess changes in her. She shares a haziness of conception with Sue Bridehead, although Grace becomes more worldly, while Sue is more locquacious and impetuous. Sue, a more modern woman, is more urbanized and mobile than Grace, and more willing, at least for a time, to act on her own behalf. The

clearest quality Grace possesses is vagueness: "Her look expressed a tendency to wait for others' thoughts before uttering her own; possibly also to wait for others' deeds before her own doings. In her small, delicate mouth, which hardly settled down to its matured curves, there was a gentleness that might hinder sufficient self-assertion for her own good" (78).

It is almost possible to beg the questions surrounding Grace's character by saying they are irrelevant. Often, it seems that Grace is completely described by what her father and the narrator say she is. In her discussion of the transactional matrix of The Woodlanders, R. Morgan underscores the irrelevance of anything Grace actually does:

> It is significant that she has developed intellectual skills and that these are totally ignored by her father. It is not her scholarship or career-potential that enhances her marketability in his eyes. Thus her achievements, in remaining unapproved and unacknowledged, are eclipsed; they are literally of no account. If Hardy characterises Grace as a 'conjectural creature' possessing no centre of being, this is to some purpose. The woman is to take 'colour' from the man she is with -- according to the authoriser of her being, her father. (55)

Here is a further example that education for middle-class women in the nineteenth century aimed at the creation of a compliant inactivity. Grace shares her plight with Maggie Tulliver and Gwendolen Harleth, and with the more rebellious Sue Bridehead; all three are products of the "hothouse and stove cultivation" that John Stuart Mill attacked in The Subjection of Women.

The absence of motherhood from the text reinforces the lack of female agency. Motherhood could provide counterbalance to patriarchal obsession; it is no coincidence that both Grace's and Marty's mothers are dead, and therefore unable to prevent their

husbands' monomania from warping their daughters' lives. Marty's self-denial is shaped, aside from her unrequited devotion to Giles Winterborne, by the attempt to bolster her father's loss of earning-power; her mother is absent from the text. The only example of motherhood is the pregnancy of Suke Damson, who is linked to the fecundity of the natural world, and who emigrates to New Zealand with her waif-like husband, Timothy Tangs. And Suke's pregnancy is caused by her liaison with Fitzpiers, acting out his assumption of seigneurial privilege.

Yet it is wrong to view Grace as totally passive and empty. The appearance of emptiness is the result of the sharp break caused in Grace's development by her urban education. Removed suddenly from the material processes of the life she knew, Grace has been prepared for a life of decorative idleness. Naturally undemonstrative, she reacts quietly, and with all the opinions given about her by her father, Giles, and Fitzpiers, it is easy to ignore the few occasions where Grace asserts herself. There is a dimension of her character which is suppressed, and at times this breaks out to express a unique point of view. When George Melbury learns of Fitzpiers' infidelity to Grace, he acts like the overbearing father he is and tries to solve the difficulties himself. He laments "her peculiar situation, as it were in mid-air between two storeys of society," and confronts Grace over the dilemma. Grace's response, reminiscent of Cordelia facing Lear, is cool and resigned: "I am what I feel, father"; "If I have anything to bear I can bear it in silence." Grace says she does not care about Mrs. Charmond, to which her father replies: "You ought to care. You have got into a very good position to start with. You have been well educated, well tended, and you have become the wife of a professional man of

unusually good family. Surely you ought to make the best of your position" (279). Grace retorts with as much vehemence as she shows anywhere: "I don't see that I ought. I wish I had never got into it. I wish you had never, never thought of educating me. I wish I worked in the woods like Marty South! I hate genteel life, and I want to be no better than she!" (279)

Grace's education has left her stranded between two ways of life. She is one of "those in whom parental discovery of the value of education has implanted tastes which parental circles fail to gratify" (226). The grammar of this phrase, with Grace as the object, reflects her passivity, and her outburst at her father is caused by frustration at the lack of control she has had over her own destiny.

Grace's education is not self-motivated. Maggie and Tom Tulliver, Jude Fawley and Sue Bridehead, are all autodidacts, who seek an education largely outside of any institutionalized 'system.' Grace's education is not the result of an urge to self-empowerment, yet it does return her to Little Hintock with a new consciousness. While away at school, Grace has learnt to imagine new possibilities for herself, and to look anew and askance at her home. Meanwhile, her father sees her as now fit for marriage to a man of higher class. Education has commodified Grace, so that she can reflect back her newly-acquired social credibility on her father.

The restlessness the returning Grace feels is the result of a sequence of events originated by her father, who is deeply stricken with "the modern vice of unrest." George Melbury is the most successful resident of Little Hintock; yet he embodies the values of acquisitive capitalism which weaken stability and a sense of community. He is the

biggest apple in the Hintock barrel, but he is also the most rotten. Melbury's outlook is dominated by notions of contract and commodity, by concern with investment and with patriarchal obligations, and this controls his attitude to his prize possession -- his daughter.

The first information we receive about Grace, before she is met by Winterborne in Sherton Abbas, is overheard by Marty South in the early hours of the morning. Marty, working secretly at night, is carrying bundles of spars to Melbury's yard. She hears Melbury and his wife, on the other side of a hedge, discussing Grace. Melbury frets that he has not invested money for Grace as insurance against the possibility of his failure in business. His wife retorts that this is unnecessary, because "she is sure to marry well," to which Melbury counters that his "plan" is for her to marry "that particular person, Giles Winterborne, and he is poor." Melbury feels obliged to follow this "plan" because of "a terrible wrong" he committed in wooing away Grace's mother from Winterborne's father, leaving him a broken man. (Grace's mother died shortly after the child's birth, whereupon Melbury married his housemaid, his present wife.) Feeling guilty about stealing one woman from the Winterborne patriarchy, Melbury attempts reparation by giving back another woman -- his daughter -- determining "to give her the best education he could afford, so as to make the gift as valuable a one as it lay in his power to bestow." But while this makes sense to Melbury according to one set of values, it conflicts with another: that of class, money, and social status. Giles no longer measures up, and Melbury regrets the lost return on his investment: "But since I have educated her so well, and so long, and so far above the level of the daughters hereabout, it is wasting her to

give her to a man of no higher standing than he."

The transactional language applied to Grace underscores that, educated or not, a woman's primary vocation is marriage. The conversation between Melbury and his wife recalls the way Maggie Tulliver is viewed by her brother, and by the lawyer Wakem. Gwendolen Harleth too, after her family's loss of fortune, must accept that despite her determination to be productive, she is only valuable as a marriageable object.

Despite his pre-eminence in Hintock, Melbury is sensitive to perceptions of his social inferiority, and wishes to make up for this through his daughter. Melbury is aware that he counts for nothing in society at large, outside of Hintock. While out one morning for a walk, Grace and her father are accosted by a member of a fox hunt. The hunter is impatient with Grace for not crying out when she saw the fox, and refers to Melbury as an "old buffer." Melbury's resentment at this treatment is all on behalf of his daughter, the index of his own social worth: "'Twas not the language to use to a woman of any niceness. You so well read and cultivated -- how could he expect ye to go shouting a view-halloo like a farm tomboy! Hasn't it cost me near a hundred a year to lift you out of all that, so as to show an example of what a woman can be?" (132) Melbury would have Grace be his passport to gentility; he is annoyed at this slight because the hunter does not see that Grace is something other than a countryman's daughter. For his investment in her education to be justified, Grace must be able to associate with his social superiors. After Mrs. Charmond offers her a job as travelling secretary, Melbury exclaims: "'Twas wonderful how she took to Grace in a few minutes; that freemasonry of education made 'em close at once. Naturally enough she was amazed that such an article -- ha -- ha! --

could come out of my house" (98).

What George Melbury calls the "freemasonry of education" unites Grace, Fitzpiers and Mrs. Charmond. Melbury has a muddled notion of 'liberal' education, much distorted from what T. H. Huxley, J. S. Mill or Matthew Arnold advocated; he sees education as a key to social and financial progress. Grace's 'cultivation' marks her apart from the local inhabitants, and propels her into the paths of Mrs. Charmond and Fitzpiers. On the ride home from Sherton Abbas, during her conversation with Giles, Grace reveals her new affinity with the 'cultured' class. Inquiring about a carriage they are approaching, and learning that it belongs to Mrs. Charmond, "Grace watched the vehicle and its easy roll, and seemed to feel more nearly akin to it than the one she was in" (85). That evening, after dinner with her parents, "Grace took a candle and began to ramble pleasurably through the rooms of her old home, from which she had latterly become well-nigh an alien" (87).

This separation of Grace from her earlier life is underscored by a changed attitude to work and to the physical world. Grace, Fitzpiers and Mrs. Charmond share a lethargy, and an aversion to physical and economic activity. The text sets up a mind-body split, and contrasts intellectual activity with physical and economic activity. This split represents a social gulf, and can be re-stated in terms of the different meanings of the word 'culture.' Educated 'culture' implies that Grace, Fitzpiers and Mrs. Charmond need not engage in distasteful work. Conversely, the Wordsworthian rustics in the novel -- such as Giles Winterborne, Marty South, and the choric group of woodland labourers -- work manually, in close contact with nature. Their lives are physical and literally

'organic'; they embody a notion of culture reminiscent of the etymology of the word. The diurnal and seasonal imperatives which structure their lives contrast with the "disinterestedness" which marks the 'cultured' triad of Grace, Fitzpiers and Mrs. Charmond.

The change wrought in Grace by her education reveals itself in the way she gravitates towards these two interlopers. She no longer considers Giles Winterborne a possible suitor, yet she is fascinated by the mere idea of FItzpiers. Grace's desire has been educated, but not her discernment: Fitzpiers is alluring and physically attractive, but he possesses neither money nor character. The attraction, however, is mutual, because Grace's education has the effect of making her a viable object socially for Fitzpiers.

Set against the stolid virtues of Marty South and Giles Winterborne, the spurious fitness of Grace and Fitzpiers for each other underscores Hardy's defeatism, and the lack of faith in his fiction regarding progress. Change may be inevitable, but it is not for the best. Jude Fawley and Sue Bridehead gain nothing except misery and tragedy through their quests for self-improvement, and the once-innocent Grace Melbury prospers materially, but at the cost of a sordid and probably unhappy future.

The first manifestation of Fitzpiers that Grace sees is a light, changing colour as it shines from the house where he lives. The light is something unusual in the area, and it causes Grace to sit up in bed: "Almost every diurnal and nocturnal effect in that woodland place had hitherto been the direct result of the regular terrestrial roll which produced the season's changes; but here was something dissociated from these normal sequences, and foreign to local knowledge" (88).

Grace is fascinated by a paradoxical mixture of residual status, and of promise in Fitzpiers: "Was he really made for higher things, do you think? Is he clever?" But what appears to be potential is more a kind of indeterminacy, another example of "the modern vice of unrest."

Fitzpiers is socially ambivalent, but in an opposite sense to Grace. Whereas Grace has risen up with the hope of joining a higher social class, Fitzpiers has lost the substance of social standing, while retaining the aura of aristocracy. Grammer Oliver tells Grace that "Though he belongs to the oldest, ancientest family in the country, he's stooped to make hisself useful like any common man" (89). Fitzpiers is decayed aristocracy, a member of the landed gentry with no land: although he disdains George Melbury socially, he is dependent on the successful trader's money. He also suggests, without actually embodying, the newer ideology of self-betterment, and apparently survives on merit and by making himself useful.

This indeterminacy is evident in the narrative treatment of Fitzpiers. He too is described as unknowable, in language as mercurial and opaque as that applied to Grace:

> Edred Fitzpiers was, on the whole, a finely formed, handsome man. His eyes were dark and impressive, and beamed with the light of energy or susceptivity -- it was difficult to say which; it might have been chiefly the latter. That quick, glittering, empirical eye, sharp for the surface of things if for nothing beneath, he had not. But whether his apparent depth of vision were real, or only an artistic accident of his corporeal moulding, nothing but his deeds could reveal. (148)

Fitzpiers, like Grace, is a "conjectural creature," described mainly in terms of physical detail which the narrator immediately discredits as untrustworthy. Also like Grace, he is not defined by actions which have solid or visible results: " . . . the doctor was not a

practical man, except by fits, and much preferred the ideal world to the real, and the discovery of principles to their application" (162).

Fitzpiers' idealization of Grace is in the typical Hardy pattern, and treats woman as a transitory object. He remarks to Winterborne, shortly after he has first seen Grace: "... if any other young lady had appeared instead of the one who did appear, I should have felt just the same interest in her, and have quoted precisely the same lines from Shelley about her, as about this one I saw. Such miserable creatures of circumstance are we all!" (165) This pulls the narrative focus away from Grace, making her character less relevant to the process of love and marriage. She shares no communion with Fitzpiers, as their relationship is cemented by a social compatibility which is deterministic rather than fulfilling. By the end of the novel, Grace and Fitzpiers have become right for each other; it is appropriate that they leave Hintock for the wider world.

There is social determinism in the way Grace and Fitzpiers end up together despite their basic incompatibility. They are a further example in Hardy of how social ambition and sexual desire work against one another. In his oft-quoted comment in the 1912 Preface to The Woodlanders, Hardy states that "In the present novel, as in one or two others of this series which involve the question of matrimonial divergence, the immortal puzzle -- given the man and the woman, how to find a basis for their sexual relation -- is left where it stood" (39). The conflict between desire and ambition is clearer in Jude the Obscure, although it is evident in The Woodlanders in Grace and Fitzpiers. Grace, constrained by the social horizons of her birthplace, has no object but Fitzpiers, who meets the outward requirements of a suitor. Fitzpiers, however, is incapable of

romantic love; his sexual desire, like his intellectual ambition, is neo-platonic, and is centred on the 'ideal' as opposed to the 'real.' He tells Winterborne: "You are right enough if you admit that I am in love with something in my own head, and no thing-in-itself outside it at all" (165).

Fitzpiers is unlike Jude Fawley in that he has no consistent ambition. Yet he survives, and even prospers, even though his marriage to Grace must hinder, if not prevent, his philandering. Fitzpiers, neither intense nor susceptible like Jude, is still entrapped by his desire. His trajectory is neither tragic, nor poignant, but it embodies an illusion of romantic and sexual fulfilment: "Ambition? -- It could be postponed. Family? -- a common culture and reciprocity of tastes had taken the place of family considerations nowadays. He allowed himself to be carried forward on the wave of desire" (205).

Fitzpiers' indolence blends and blurs different kinds of desire, and leaves him vulnerable to circumstance in the shape of a dubious marriage. Intellectual and social ambition are types of desire, but Fitzpiers' idealism, which relies on the female form to embody perfection, becomes no more than a shoddy and seedy rationale for philandering. Fitzpiers initially has an aura of promise, depth, and romance; on closer view, he is shown to be nothing more than a lazy womanizer.

The knowledge Fitzpiers seeks, and the manner of his search, reveal his character. As a doctor he appears to represent the influx of modern ideas into the midst of pagan superstition, but his own interests are anachronistic and alchemical. In more than one place he is likened, when lying still, to a medievai effigy; we are often reminded of the antiquity of his family name. Intellectually, his closest analogue is Shelley, whose poetry

infuses the novel. Like Shelley, the young doctor is a restless, voracious and fitful metaphysician:

> Fitzpiers was in a distinct degree scientific, being ready and zealous to interrogate all physical manifestations; but primarily he was an idealist. He believed that behind the imperfect lay the perfect; that rare things were to be discovered amidst a bulk of commonplace; that results in a new and untried case might be different from those in other cases where the material conditions had been precisely similar. (182)

We know nothing of how Fitzpiers has been educated. We see only his autodidacticism; like so many other characters in this study, he is left to define himself through a search for knowledge. No effective apparatus exists in these novels to carry out the "formation of character"; education, being self-directed, leads to self-justification or self-intensification.

While it is true that education does not change the self, it does change expectation and self-awareness. Education changes how characters view their relations to others; it destroys their ability to remain unthinkingly immersed in their native social background. This is true of Grace, who once knew the productive life of the woodlanders, but has now been prepared to live what her father calls a "high, perusing life." Contemplating marriage to Fitzpiers, she is lured by the prospect of 'disinterested' intellectual activity: "His material standing of itself, either present or future, had little in it to feed her ambition, but the possibilities of a refined and cultivated inner life, of subtle psychological intercourse, had their charm" (216). The only period of sustained activity we see from Grace occurs after Giles' death when she "stayed indoors a great deal," and "became quite a student, reading more than she had done since her marriage" (413). Here is a clear indication that Grace does have intellectual ambition; somewhere inside her, her

education has released a yearning to go beyond the transitory and the material.

Nevertheless, it seems for a long while, after the adultery of Fitzpiers and the selflessness of Giles, that Grace has switched her allegiance back to the woodland way of life. She eschews ambition for "weeks and months" as she and Marty memorialize the now-dead Giles. Grace has travelled a full circuit of experience: "Nothing had ever brought home to her with such force as this death how little acquirements and culture weigh beside sterling personal character" (403). This knowledge implies a loss of innocence: Grace now knows the emptiness behind the mirage of self-improvement, but she is compromised by what she has become in order to learn this. She can no longer remain in Hintock, and re-unites with Fitzpiers, who has much more difficulty wooing her a second time.

Fitzpiers' renewed interest in Grace is less the result of reformed character, than of desire rekindled by coquetry. Grace consciously piques her husband by tricking him into believing that her relationship with Giles was sexual. The hollow-turner, who has eavesdropped in standard Hardy fashion, remarks:

> She's got him quite tame. But how long 'twill last I can't say. I happened to be setting a wire on the top of my garden one night when he met her on the other side of the hedge; and the way she queened it, and fenced it, and kept that poor feller at a distance was enough to freeze yer blood. I should never have supposed it of such a girl. (437)

This is immediately contrasted with Marty South, who continues her vigil at Winterborne's grave looking "almost like a being who had rejected with indifference the attribute of sex for the loftier quality of abstract humanism" (438). Marty's detachment from the physical is based on an enforced control of the destructive nature of sexuality,

and this is a salutary contrast to the separation of mind and body we see in Grace, Mrs. Charmond and Fitzpiers. For all the 'improvement' bestowed upon Grace by her education, she is still judged unfavourably against the untutored Marty.

Despite her increased sexual empowerment, Grace is still in a submissive position; one that is in some ways worse than Marty's. Grace has access to a more elegant, affluent life than Marty, but she is liable to greater catastrophe. Like all over-reachers, Grace courts tragedy, avoiding it by shallowness and expediency. She has less capacity for self-knowledge than the other protagonists in this study, and as the novel progresses she becomes a less interesting character, ceding ground at the end of the narrative to the more resonant Marty. In leaving behind her "knowable community," it is much harder for Grace to have a knowable self.

As the plot draws to a close, Giles and Mrs. Charmond are already dead, while the shaky partnerships of Suke Damson and Timothy Tangs, and Grace and Fitzpiers have been preserved. Both couples are preparing to depart to what will supposedly be better lives, while the prosaic Marty is left behind, like a Horatio or an Albany, to comment, and to return life to normal. Grace's new prospects are not based on solid ground: Fitzpiers shows no evidence of having been reformed, and his purchase of "a beautiful practice two hundred miles off" is the result of a fluke of inheritance, not of talent or hard work.

Fitzpiers' renewed interest in Grace will probably not last for long, as it is rekindled only by her teasing pretense of unavailability. Grace leaves the novel struggling under a greater weight of masculine judgement than she has yet borne. In addition to the hollow-turner's remarks quoted earlier, she must now suffer the

disapproval even of her father, who sees the dangers of her returning to Fitzpiers:

> "Well -- he's her husband," Melbury said to himself, "and let her take him back to her bed if she will! . . . But let her bear in mind that the woman walks and laughs somewhere at this very moment whose neck he'll be coling next year as he does hers to-night; and as he did Felice Charmond's last year; and Suke Damson's the year afore! . . . It's a forlorn hope for her; and God knows how it will end!" (331)

The final narrative judgement of the novel foregrounds the lonely and unheeded Marty. Even as the novel depicts the dour honesty of Marty and Giles as outmoded, it signals its moral superiority over the unstable and selfish laxity of Grace and Fitzpiers. The union of Marty and Giles is only one of spirit, and will leave no children to preserve their virtues for the future. But where Grace has acquired sexual and social power, Marty is given the narrative power of speaking the final words of the novel; it is she who can educate us as to the significance of the story we have just read.

CHAPTER III NOTES

[1]This narrative strategy is impelled by both psychological and ideological forces. It is, as I argue, a function of Hardy's own 'improvement' and social ascent into the middle class. This contributes to the actual sophistication of the novel's narrative structure: Hardy has moved from one specific position within a rural world, to the position of a far-seeing observer who must of necessity 'stand back.' Dale Kramer comments on this narrative diffusion:

> A complex employment of point of view contributes toward preventing a single figure from attaining central importance in the novel. The Woodlanders is told from a point of view that can best be described as controlled by an omniscient narrator who employs both his oracular stance and a multiplicity of limited perspectives. (102)

[2]Nina Auerbach is only one of many critics who have examined the fictionalizing of women in nineteenth century art. Her comments in Woman and the Demon (1982) are relevant for Hardy's attitude to women:

> Attached only marginally to the daily business of her society, torn between the poles of victim and queen, woman was so powerful an imaginative abstraction that she assumed the status of literature-in-life, leading humanity beyond the limits of mortality to the transfigured freedom of the literary character. (62)

[3]Two comments by Elaine Showalter in her essay "The Unmanning of the Mayor of Casterbridge" capture this tension in Hardy. Showalter acknowledges Hardy's penetrative yet incomplete apprehension of women: "Hardy not only commented upon, and in a sense, infiltrated, feminine fictions; he also understood the feminine self as the estranged and essential component of the male self" (101). Describing women as "the weaker sex" abandoned them to a state of vulnerability: "Hardy's emphasis on the biological determinism of childbearing, rather than on the economic determinants of female dependency, put him more in the camp of Grant Allen than in the women's party" (102).

[4]Two points need to be made here. First, this narrative strategy is common throughout Hardy's fiction. Second, his very closeness to the material implies the distance in narrative treatment. George Woodcock observed, in his Introduction to the Penguin edition of The Return of the Native, that Hardy generally:

> . . . he failed to develop a real introspective life within his characters. We are left with people caught up in dramatic events they have half-consciously set in motion, reacting inarticulately or at least inexpressively, and projected as psychological entities mainly by means of their actions in crisis, externally observed. (21)

This is especially true of The Woodlanders, which refuses to centre on one hero or

heroine. The tendency towards passivity in the novel means that one character's deeds do not push them to the fore. This tragedy of inaction is reinforced by what Mary Jacobus calls the "diffusion of sensibility" over a range of characters. John Bayley argues that as " . . . creativity for Hardy was closely associated with passivity and defeat," there was really too much identification with too many of the characters in The Woodlanders. According to Bayley, this has a backlash effect which intensifies Hardy's usual narrative distance: "This involuntary closeness to his characters is probably the real reason for the alienation which is evident in the novel, particularly towards its end" (8).

CHAPTER IV

"JUDE THE OBSCURE": FLESH, LETTER AND SPIRIT

"What is called the idealization of characters is, in truth, the making of them too real to be possible." (Thomas Hardy, "The Profitable Reading of Fiction.")

Thomas Hardy wrote in the Preface to the first edition of Jude the Obscure (1896) that the novel attempted "to tell, without a mincing of words, of a deadly war waged between flesh and spirit; and to point the tragedy of unfulfilled aims." The novel's hero, Jude Fawley, pursues a specious vision of wholeness through education, but in doing so he fails to see himself as a particular man in a particular social and historical context. The lack of clarity of his conception for self-improvement is mirrored, if in less extreme form, by other characters in the novels I discuss. Only Tom Tulliver sets himself definite, achievable goals: Maggie Tulliver, Gwendolen Harleth, Daniel Deronda, Grace Melbury and Edred Fitzpiers all lack clear direction in their quests. Those who survive and prosper do so more by luck and privilege than by their own conscious efforts.

Formal education is out of reach to Jude at this time as a member of the working-class, and, even if it were not, education by itself could not effect the transformation he desires. Jude travels towards self-knowledge, like a typical hero of the realistic novel; in the process he sheds several illusions and obsessions, learning his true self and place in the world. Education is the first of these obsessions, anchoring all the others, and driving the plot. As with other novels in this study, education cannot change the basic outline of a character, and it is subordinate to the wider themes of character growth and integration

into society.

Jude and his cousin Sue Bridehead, both self-taught, are displaced by education from the social contexts into which they are born. Both are displaced from class and community, and Sue attempts to live outside the normal prescriptions of gender. Education changes their self-awareness, but does not provide them with a new place in society; it is ironically true to the etymology of the word, and 'draws forth' traits which make them unfit members of society. Neurosis is an everyday condition, as Hardy observed when he wrote of their "nerves being stretched to an activity abnormal in such an environment." Their heightened consciousnesses are incomplete and impotent; superior education creates uncertainty instead of helping to build a fortune.

Jude's process of self-discovery is a progressive realization of hopelessness. He fails in all he undertakes, which is bad enough, but what is worse, he learns that there is no way he could have succeeded. The inevitability of failure is inherent in Jude himself, and in his relationship to the world at large. Jude is a flawed character; he is ignorant and deluded, an orphan whose isolation is continually emphasized by the commentary of a detached and rationalistic narrator.

The narrator has a superior perception which contrasts with Jude's impotence. His manipulations and interjections foreclose Jude's search for fulfilment, implying that education cannot change either Jude or his place in society. Virginia Hyman argues that the narrator "establishes the reader's position in advance of Jude from the very beginning," explaining that this is done "by making Jude both the subject and the object of the story" (153). Penelope Vigar notes of Jude's "tragedy of unfulfilled aims": "All

through the novel Hardy's method is to point the difference between objective and subjective truth, the real and the imagined ideal" (194). Richard Benvenuto contrasts two 'modes of perception' in the novel, one of which is "humanizing," the other "abstract," "objective and universal." Benvenuto argues that "Jude's mode of perception is individualistic and emotive; its frame of reference is composed of specific living things . . . "; overarching this is the narrator, who "combines an ironic with a literal mode of discourse and implies two perspectives from which man can be viewed and judged" (32). The narrator assesses Jude's progress from the standpoint of one who, in the words of John Sutherland, "has the privilege of that knowledge which Victorian society will deny Jude" (162). This dialectic between the narrator's knowledge and that of the characters defines the transformative power of education in Jude the Obscure; it derives, as Raymond Williams has shown, from the "relation between customary and educated life" embodied in Hardy's own ambivalent status[1].

Coming from a humble, unlettered background, Hardy knew at first hand the difficulties he noted in the Preface to the first edition of Jude the Obscure of "acquiring knowledge in letters without pecuniary means."[2] This helps Jude the Obscure illuminate the dialectic between education and class in ways that were not possible for many of the nineteenth-century thinkers who addressed this issue. This argument is developed at length by Raymond Williams, and followed by Terry Eagleton in his preface to the MacMillan New Wessex edition of Jude the Obscure: it claims that Hardy was well placed to understand the uncertainties faced by "the semi-independent tradesman class" which "offered a peculiarly intense focus for the disruptive social forces at work"

(Woodworth 32). Williams discusses "the educated consciousness of the facts of change" in Hardy's novels:

> The exposed and separated individuals, whom Hardy puts at the centre of his fiction, are only the most developed cases of a general exposure and separation. Yet they are never merely illustrations of this change in a way of life. Each has a dominant personal history, which in psychological terms bears a direct relation to the social character of the change. (The Country and the City 210)

Jude the Obscure challenges the contemporary view of progress by showing individuals at odds with themselves and with society. Jude's quest for education becomes the ground of struggle for his own deficiencies of character, as well as for the class conflict which education was supposed to negate.

Jude the Obscure, Hardy's last novel, is perhaps his most depressing and deterministic work. (This, and its hostile treatment of marriage, explains much of the visceral scorn heaped upon it by its reviewers). The narrator completely forecloses Jude's desires, but though he mediates between Jude and the reader, he gives no reassurance. Jude's demise is presented with ominous flatness, and the only comfort we gain from the novel is backhanded; a cathartic release which dismisses the novel's bitter implications behind its fictionality. It is not that success or happiness are impossible for anyone to achieve; they are, however, impossible for Jude, or any of the other main characters. Hardy's business is not to portray any happier people or worlds that may exist: he is concerned primarily with Jude Fawley, who is disqualified from finding fulfilment by temperament, social class, and by the historical period in which he lives. That there may be people for whom the opposite is true is only partly encouraging: Jude's predicament is

mainly caused by bad luck. For Hardy, birth into a particular class, or with a particular temperament, has more impact on a life than any education. Against the nineteenth-century litanies of progress, improvement and self-help, Jude the Obscure presents the ancient notion of fate damning someone from the start.

The Bildungsroman form facilitates this. Jude the Obscure, denying its hero fulfilment, and ending in his death, follows the darker, more pessimistic strain of the genre. The hero's death provides a psychological firebreak for the author, who is further insulated by the passionless omnipotence of the narrator. This is all typical of the Bildungsroman genre, but it is so acute in Jude the Obscure because of Hardy's sensitivity and extreme reticence concerning his own life, and particularly his early beginnings. All this exaggerates, and even stylizes, the foreclosure of Jude's quest for satisfaction. The implications of Hardy's determinism, and of his deflating portrayals of human weakness and social hypocrisy remain, but they are characterized as much by their differences from Hardy's experience, as by their similarities. As with Eliot's Maggie Tulliver, Jude Fawley is a 'former self'; in both cases the reality of the author's own life is much more reassuring than its fictional revision.

The Bildungsroman form of Jude the Obscure, and its concern with one main character has another important function: it gives the novel cohesion[3]. Many critics have argued the opposite, claiming that Jude the Obscure is a fragmentary novel, with several strong but disparate themes. Albert J. Guerard complains of a "multitude of detachable and separate problems" in the novel, and goes on to list seven of them. I agree with Ian Gregor that Jude the Obscure is "concerned with an internal quest for the reality of the

self," and that specific themes are subordinate to this: "Education, which begins as a matter of being "crazy for books", leads into trying to understand the nature of the human condition; sex, which begins as the casual seduction of a barmaid, is seen to be an integral part of this understanding" (246). The quest for education, even though it recedes into the background, begins Jude's movement from ignorance to an understanding of his hopeless position in society.

The several thematic conflicts of Jude the Obscure are all connected in the search for education, and in the "war between flesh and spirit" noted in Hardy's Preface[4]. This "war" characterizes Jude in himself; it characterizes his search for education; and it also characterizes the way in which education embodies, in Jude the Obscure, a struggle between the individual and society. The pursuit of knowledge becomes identified with the spirit, and the physical world -- that of sex, work, and money --with an intrusive and destructive flesh. In the most obvious sense, the conflict of flesh and spirit in Jude is a conflict of body and mind: Jude's pursuit of intellectual and spiritual achievement is blocked by inveterate sexual passion. His search for education ignores women (who are misogynistically and metonymically made to represent "the flesh"), and denies the material conditions of his life; the pursuit of fulfilment is opposed to economic, physical and social fact.

The narrator presents all this bleakly and directly, without the palliative of confessional intimacy, and follows a model of objective scientific detachment; it is as if Jude were a case-study, or a specimen under a microscope. The way the narrator reports Jude's thoughts and speeches, with sparing commentary, falsely suggests a lack of

mediation. One example of this is Jude's haziness after his "true illumination" about work, which contrasts with the narrator's concise diagnosis:

> He did not at that time see that mediaevalism was as dead as a fern-leaf in a lump of coal; that other developments were shaping in the world around him, in which Gothic architecture and its associations had no place. The deadly animosity of contemporary logic towards so much of what he held in reverence was not yet revealed to him. (131)

The narrator's comments, in foreboding Darwinian language, are a judgement on what Jude does, and does not know. They close out the episode, Jude leaves the stoneyard, and the subject changes.

We can compare Hardy's narrative interpolation here with those of Eliot, especially in The Mill on the Floss, which like Jude the Obscure is also a tragic Bildungsroman. Hardy's narrator does not provide a benificent teleology to explain individual tragedy, as do Eliot's narrators. Tragedy, for Hardy, is typical of the universe; for Eliot, it is unfortunate and at times even inevitable, but it is only a local setback in the general progress of humanity. Differing views of history are evident: Hardy subscribing to an impersonal, deterministic, Darwinian view; Eliot following the humanistic Riehl.

The narrator sees the architecture of Christminster, which Jude patches up for money, as outmoded; he sees the theology Jude reads as defunct; he sees the complexity of biblical texts more thoroughly than Jude; and he starkly notes Jude's impracticality. All these strands are drawn together as Jude first reaches his "city of light." The very texts Jude studies, quotes, and even scrawls as graffitti on Christminster walls are apposite, and the narrator illustrates their irony:

> Like enthusiasts in general he made no inquiries into details of procedure.

> Picking up general notions from casual acquaintance, he never dwelt upon them. For the present, he said to himself, the one thing necessary was to get ready by accumulating money and knowledge, and await whatever chances were afforded to such an one of becoming a son of the university. 'For wisdom is a defence, and money is a defence; but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to them that have it.' His desire absorbed him, and left no part of him to weigh its practicability. (134)

This opposition between "knowledge" and "wisdom," existing against the need to accumulate money, characterizes Jude's self-education. Many of the biblical quotations in the novel indicate the primacy of a 'true' perception which Jude lacks, although he does approach this, Job-like, after extensive suffering. Jude's greater awareness is prompted not by spiritual insight but by the dismissive Christminster establishment. When he receives the letter from T. Tetuphenay, the Master of Biblioll College, Jude gets drunk in the demi-monde of the city[5]. The rejection and the alcoholic stupor convince him that "He had tapped the real Christminster life." Passing Biblioll College, Jude "took from his pocket the lump of chalk which as a workman he usually carried there, and wrote along the wall: 'I have understanding as well as you; I am not inferior to you: yea, who knoweth not such things as these?' -- Job xii. 3." Rejected, drunk, and behaving like a vandal, and with his combined experience of artisanship and scholarship, Jude can see his true relationship to Christminster.

The epigraph to Jude the Obscure is another commentary on Jude's faulty perception. "The letter killeth" is terse in its biblical finality and its lack of a grammatical object; the source of the quotation, however, is fuller:

> Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God;
> Who hath also made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the

> letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. (II Corinthians 3, 5-6)

This is relevant to Jude, who undertakes his task without spiritual or academic guidance. The novel denies God, yet damns Jude for his pride in thinking he is sufficient for the task. The spirit Jude pursues is not that bestowed by God, but is secular, and individualistic: Jude seeks a vague cerebral fulfilment, rather than infusion with the power of God. Jude is restless and Romantic; he is a kind of industrial Shelleyan hero who quests in a landscape of railways and stoneyards. The novel denies God just as much as it denies redemptive human connection or the existence of benevolent authorities, making Jude's commitment to ecclesiastical knowledge futile.

Besides perception, St. Paul's text deals with the problem of vocation, in its earlier sense of a 'call' from God. Jude's dilemmas of opportunity are modern in the way they conflate 'career,' 'vocation' and 'occupation,' and in the way they subordinate personality to the act of earning money. Even though Jude's chosen route is through the Church, and even though he is gentle and timid, his quest is one of self-glorification. He aims to become a self-made man, and fails because he cannot perceive his true relation to the secular world he inhabits. (Others, from his neighbours and co-workers, to the Master of Biblioll College, can perceive this only too well).

This problem of vocation dominates Jude's life. It is linked to his inability to perceive just what his options are. In Richard Benvenuto's words, "Perception and judgement become one and the same act" for Jude, where Christminster is concerned (34). His first full day in Oxford has Jude looking for work, as he must satisfy the needs

of the flesh before he can pursue his dream of the spirit. Standing in a stoneyard in the most ecclesiastical of cities, surrounded by the paraphernalia of church restoration, Jude has a fleeting, secular epiphany:

> For a moment there fell on Jude a true illumination; that here in the stone yard was a centre of effort as worthy as that dignified by the name of scholarly study within the noblest of colleges. But he lost it under the stress of his old idea. He would accept any employment which might be offered him on the strength of his late employer's recommendation; but he would accept it as a provisional thing only. This was his form of the modern vice of unrest. (131)

This "modern vice of unrest" is the result of desire outstripping the ability to achieve, and it causes the present to seem unimportant and temporary, as its contradictions are deferred onto an ever-receding future. It is an unfortunate consequence of the liberal and indivualistic philosophy of improvement, inculcating unrealistic ambitions in the minds of those who, like Jude, can only advance themselves in certain prescribed ways.

That Jude can never reach this future is made clear; he is presented from the start as doomed to failure. In addition to the narrator's comments, the lamentations of his aunt Drusilla establish this: "It would ha' been a blessing if Goddy-mighty had took thee too, wi' thy mother and father, poor useless boy!" Jude, an orphan, has no family except his grisly aunt and his cousin Sue; neither does he have what Raymond Williams calls when talking of George Eliot, a "knowable community." His separation from the land, and from people, is pre-ordained and chronic. Jude is without a mentor, and in place of one, he identifies with the schoolmaster Phillotson, from whom he picks up his "fixed vision" of Christminster.

That Jude's pre-destination will involve books and education is also established

early. The narrator shows the inevitable futility of Phillotson's scheme before the end of the first paragraph. Phillotson's packing is straightforward except for a single "cumbersome article," a piano which the schoolmaster "had bought at an auction during the year in which he thought of learning instrumental music." This project, like his university scheme, is never carried out. Jude's identification with Phillotson is shown in his tearfulness at the schoolmaster's departure: the parting present of a book, and Phillotson's deceptively concise description of his scheme, both foreshadow the eleven-year-old's future obsession. Aunt Drusilla's comments to Jude in the next chapter further cement these impressions, and introduce Sue as bound up with Jude's hereditary flaws:

> Why didn't ye get the schoolmaster to take 'ee to Christminster with 'un, and make a scholar of 'ee . . . I'm sure he couldn't ha' took a better one. The boy is crazy for books, that he is. It runs in our family rather. His cousin Sue is just the same -- so I've heard; but I have not seen the child for years, though she was born in this place, within these four walls, as it happened. (52)

Jude and Sue are linked together by more than their interest in books. Foredoomed by their common heritage, they share a genetic inability to 'fit in' to society. The other two major characters in the novel, Phillotson and Arabella, also share this indeterminacy, without being so drastically marked out for the abject failure Jude and Sue must endure. Phillotson and Arabella both wander like Jude and Sue -- Arabella emigrates to Australia at one point -- and both experience wildly fluctuating fortunes in the course of the narrative. Like Jude and Sue, Phillotson and Arabella must continually struggle for economic security and emotional peace. What makes Jude the Obscure even bleaker is that Phillotson and Arabella are, by contrast with Jude and Sue, the touchstones of normality and stability. The main characters in the novel diverge, supposedly, from

some norm of social, sexual and psychological integration, but this norm is never presented to us, except by default. The closest we have to a generalized 'voice of society' comes from Jude's aunt Drusilla, an acerbic old woman who is solitary and unmarried by choice; and the widow Mrs. Edlin, whose own simple, but successful marriage, is long buried in the past.

There are no examples of successful relationships in the novel: everyone is isolated. A. Alvarez writes that "the essential subject" of Jude the Obscure "is loneliness": this loneliness is most pronounced in the case of Jude, and is reinforced by his separation from the Wessex landscape, with its extensive history. In Eliot's fiction, landscape acts as a basis of connection, and a sense of place provides continuity and rootedeness; in Hardy's fiction, the landscape mutely records the destructiveness and the impersonality of change. The well in the first chapter is "as ancient as the village itself," but the old church has been ravaged by restoration, and the old graves "obliterated" in favour of cheap and temporary "cast iron crosses warranted to last five years" (51). Jude, like these crosses, is an interloper. The field where Farmer Troutham stations him to scare away rooks has a "meanly utilitarian air . . . depriving it of all history beyond that of the few recent months" (53). The field is imbued with a rich history, of which only the narrator is now aware: "Every inch had been the site, first or last, of energy, gaiety, horse-play, bickerings, weariness" (53). Jude's only connection is with the scavenging birds: "A magic thread of fellow-feeling united his own life with theirs. Puny and sorry as those lives were, they much resembled his own" (54).

Jude's disconnection from the rural landscape helps to impel him to Christminster,

but his education fails to provide him with any human contact. Jude never has a teacher, so he teaches himself; his autodidact career meanders over intellectual and ecclesiastical history much as his body meanders over the Wessex countryside. Jude's first stay in Christminster links this isolation to his typically modern experience of loneliness in a city; but even earlier, the hopelessness of his quest is related to the dearth of human contact. When Jude discovers, on looking into the Latin and Greek grammars, that language learning is an incremental "labour like that of Israel in Egypt," he is discouraged. The narrator, while leaving Jude to flounder and to fling around his volumes in disgust, closes out this chapter by pointing out that a little help, which of course is not forthcoming, would get him over this problem:

> Somebody might have come along who would have asked him his trouble, and might have cheered him by saying that his notions were further advanced than those of his grammarian. But nobody did come, because nobody ever does; and under the crushing recognition of his gigantic error Jude continued to wish himself out of the world. (72)

Once again the narrator bluntly points to the gulf separating Jude from his dream. This is a further example of Hardy's determinism manifesting itself in the foreclosure of Jude's quest. Jude is a poor rural outcast, whose desires are hopelessly out of step with his material circumstances. There is no organized system of education available to teach someone like Jude the classical languages, and there is no sympathetic mentor at hand to help him fulfil his abstruse desire.

This dreary desperation of his early life leads Jude into escapism, in which education becomes a panacea. D. H. Lawrence commented:

> What he indeed wanted to get from study was, not a store of learning, nor the

> vanity of education, a sort of superiority of educational wealth, though this gave him pleasure. He wanted, through familiarity with the thinkers and poets, particularly with the classic and theological thinkers, because of their comparative sensuousness, to find conscious expression for what he had in his blood. (Guerard 74)

What Jude wants is of the mind and the body; any sensuousness the classical thinkers display is too abstract for him. The narrator observes this when Jude's sexual attraction to Sue becomes evident: "But it was also obvious that man could not live by work alone: that the particular man Jude, at any rate, wanted something to love." His life is so desolate, that he feels an all-pervasive yearning; a need to fill several major deficiencies, not just one. The overwhelming, comprehensive emptiness of Jude's life means that he is unable to distinguish between different types of desire. As a result, his desire is always escapist, obsessive and ill-defined.

One result of this is that even the physical referents for Jude's longings become phantasmal. Christminster and Sue are described in language that denotes flawed vision; to Jude, both are illusive, like a vision in a Shelleyan quest-poem. Norman Holland observes "a strong tendency for the people and events to become symbols" in Jude the Obscure (50). Christminster provides a thematic and geographical link, however, to each of Jude's obsessions: Phillotson, the city itself, education, and his cousin Sue. The city is first suggested to the eleven-year-old Jude by the schoolmaster Phillotson: it remains the site, or the backdrop, for much of Jude's conflicted life, and the novel ends with his death in the city. Before the advent of Sue, the city had been blended in Jude's mind with Phillotson: "And the city acquired a tangibility, a permanence, a hold on his life, mainly from the one nucleus of fact that the man for whose knowledge and purposes he had so

much reverence was actually living there; not only so, but living among the more thoughtful and mentally shining ones therein" (62). Jude does not distinguish between "something" and "someone": "He was getting so romantically attached to Christminster that, like a young lover alluding to his mistress, he felt bashful at mentioning its name again."; "It had been the yearning of his heart to find something to anchor on, to cling to -- for some place which he could call admirable."

The narrative treatment of Jude's fixation with Christminster frequently involves movement and distance, as well as an awareness of topography. Jude muses as he walks, and views the city repeatedly from "the upland whereon he had experienced the chief emotions of his life." The physical journey to Christminster is a demographic journey, from country to city, and hopefully from rural artisan to metropolitan scholar. It is also a journey from the known to the unknown; a denial of the 'flesh' of his prior life in rural Wessex, and of his prior marriage to Arabella, in favour of the 'spirit' of Christminster and, later, of the spirit-made-flesh in Sue. Yet while we identify with Jude as the main character and the focus of the narrative, the point-of-view creates a detachment which illustrates the futility of Jude's actions. The narrator prepares for the arrival in Christminster, and creates the possibility for detachment with consistent imagery. Christminster is an "ecclesiastical romance in stone," an alluring and unreal vision upon which Jude muses:

> 'It is a city of light,' he said to himself.
> 'The tree of knowledge grows there,' he added a few steps further on.
> 'It is a place that teachers of men spring from and go to.'
> 'It is what you may call a castle, manned by scholarship and religion.'
> After this figure he was silent a long while, till he added: 'It would just suit

me.' (66)

The narrative here invites a diminution of Jude's heroic day-dreaming; it is a litany, with the occasional nudge from the narrator. Christminster is Jude's grail, but the narrator presents it as unattainable.

Until he arrives in the city in 'Part Second,' Jude has only seen Christminster at a distance. Early physical descriptions of the city are characterized by images of ghostliness and insubstantiality; when Jude, as a little boy, climbs the ladder and first sees the far-off city, it is in conditions of changing light:

> Some way within the limits of the stretch of landscape, points of light like the topaz gleamed. The air increased in transparency with the lapse of minutes, till the topaz points showed themselves to be the vanes, windows, wet roof slates, and other shining spots upon the spires, domes, freestonework, and varied outlines that were faintly revealed. It was Christminster, unquestionably; either directly seen, or miraged in the peculiar atmosphere. (61)

The reverie is undercut by the narrator's refusal to take part; Jude views inanimate architecture instead of grand topography, as the setting sun reveals the submerged gothic. Were this vision in a romantic poem, the quest-object would be sustained by rhetorical intensity; here, the narrator demystifies the vision for the reader, while it remains intact for Jude. According to Geoffrey Thurley this vision, with its "Bunyanesque purity and fervour," is implausible: Jude could not possibly see all this detail. Jude does not see the real, physical city in which people live and work, but a fantasy-projection.

This imagery continues when Jude first arrives in Christminster. The narrator develops an air of storybook unreality now that Jude has reached the city: "He was a species of Dick Whittington whose spirit was touched to finer tissues than a mere

material gain" (124). Yet Jude finds his destination, like a mirage or a chimera, to be quite different from his earlier perceptions of it. And as with a mirage or a chimera, it is the light which is treacherous and inconstant. The first street lamps of the city "winkled their yellow eyes at him dubiously, and as if, though they had been waiting him all these years in disappointment at his tarrying, they did not much want him now" (124). Jude's lack of foresight is characteristic of other protagonists in this study. Maggie Tulliver, Gwendolen Harleth, and Grace Melbury all at one time follow naively conceived plans for advancement or fulfilment, and each encounter epochal disappointments and deflations.

On this first night in Christminster, Jude wanders among the silent and inert colleges. As is the case repeatedly throughout the novel, Jude is very close to, but actually outside a building associated with education: a schoolroom, college, or examination hall, for example. The point-of-view here is the narrator's; there is a gap between our perception of Christminster as a sepulchre of dead medievalism, and Jude's own confused fumbling along the walls. His skill as a stone-mason is ironically apt: it grants him a sense of the inertia of Christminster, but he does not make the necessary connection (which is made by the narrator), that what is within the buildings might be as moribund as the structures themselves: "It seemed impossible that modern thought could house itself in such decrepit and superseded chambers" (125). Jude's perception of Christminster is, literally, unrealistic and this is reinforced by images of ghostliness[6].

In addition to the narrator's ironic descriptions of Christminster, Sue provides a critique. For Jude, Christminster is the "City of Light," and "a unique centre of thought

and religion -- the intellectual and spiritual granary of the country." Jude sees the stasis of Christminster as the result of balance and harmony: "All that silence and absence of goings-on is the stillness of infinite motion -- the sleep of the spinning-top, to borrow the simile of a well-known writer."[7] Sue, with a "broader, truer" grasp of her reading, can recognize the city's paralysis: "At present intellect in Christminster is pushing one way, and religion the other; and so they stand stock-still, like two rams butting each other"; "It is a place full of fetishists and ghost-seers" (205). Even though her argument with Jude is prompted by petulance, Sue can see Jude's relationship to Christminster:

> It is an ignorant place, except as to the townspeople, artizans, drunkards and paupers . . . They see life as it is, of course; but few of the people in the colleges do. You prove it in your own person. You are one of the very men Christminster was intended for when the colleges were founded: a man with a passion for learning, but no money, or opportunities, or friends. But you were elbowed off the pavements by the millionaires' sons. (205)

The obstacles which confront Jude are easy to state: they are lack of money; of influential connection; and of competent tutelage. Yet, as we have seen, Jude has no place in his native community, and this means that for him social mobility is not so much an empowering possibility, as a perilous necessity. The "modern vice of unrest" is a psychological effect of economic and social conditions: "He feared that his whole scheme had degenerated to, even though it might not have originated in, a social unrest which had no foundation in the nobler instincts; which was purely an artificial product of civilization"[8] (181). Instead of aimimg for feasible prosperity in the city through trade, Jude aims for the university, thereby aspiring to membership of a class well above his own. Education is an important means of social mobility, but money (usually acquired

through trade) must underpin a rise in social class: "However it was my poverty and not my will that consented to be beaten. It takes two or three generations to do what I tried to do in one . . ." (398). The kind of education and knowledge Jude seeks is out of the reach of one of his class: wealth must precede culture.

Material difficulties alone are enough to defeat Jude's quest, but resistance to class mobility acts in both directions, and Jude suffers opprobrium from his peers for thinking above his station. Jude's aspiration is seen as socially as well as economically impossible. Aunt Drusilla tells Jude that "It is a place much too good for you ever to have much to do with, poor boy, I'm a thinking"; "We've never had anything to do with folk in Christminster, nor folk in Christminster with we." Rural working people view Jude's education as "play," and not "work." The difference between manual and intellectual labour is firmly encoded in class divisions; Jude's pursuit of an intellectual life requires leaving behind his previous life, and this includes the people who share his social background. This inverted snobbery is also evident in The Mill on the Floss, where both Tom and Maggie Tulliver encounter disapproval for harbouring ambitions beyond their social station. In The Woodlanders, the contrast between manual and intellectual labour achieves even greater significance, where the educated characters are a parasitical, decadent and disruptive force.

In addition to social and financial obstacles, there is the sexual obstacle of which Jude is originally unaware. Jude shares with Maggie Tulliver, Gwendolen Harleth, and Grace Melbury the surprise of awakening sexuality, an inevitable part of growth and character formation. Each protagonist deals with sexuality differently: Jude, who cannot

get by without money, cannot get by without women. The very manner in which sexuality enters his life is abrupt and disruptive. Before his meeting with Arabella, Jude had been unaware of women and of how they might affect him. It had been his "last intention . . . to be occupied with the feminine." Walking home from work one day at age nineteen, Jude is dragged from a reverie about his Platonic aims, and back into the physical world by Arabella, who hurls at him "the characteristic part of a barrow-pig." Arabella awakens Jude's dormant sexuality, and ends his ability to exclude women from his life:

> It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that till this moment Jude had never looked at a woman to consider her as such, but had vaguely regarded the sex as being outside his life and purposes. He gazed from her eyes to her mouth, thence to her bosom, and to her full round naked arms, wet, mottled with the chill of the water, and firm as marble." (83)

Flesh intrudes upon spirit, and Jude is never the same again; the task of reaching Christminster, never easy, now becomes impossible.

This sexual "call" from Arabella is directly opposed to the spiritual "call" which Jude never gets, but which he tries to substitute by grafting away at the study of religious texts: "The unvoiced call of woman to man, which was uttered very distinctly by Arabella's personality, held Jude to the spot against his intention -- almost against his will, in a way new to his experience" (83). Jude later realises, after a passionate embrace with Sue, that his sexual urge is ineradicable, and that it conflicts with his wish "of becoming the soldier and servant of a religion in which sexual love was regarded as at its best a frailty, and at its worst damnation" (278).

Jude learns through all of this that he is incapable of the exclusive misogyny

necessary to his pursuit of patriarchal knowledge. While the 'education of his character' involves sexual initiation, it is women, through marriage, who help form his social identity. Besides stigmatizing marriage as "the artificial system of things, under which the normal sex-impulses are turned into devilish domestic gins and springes to noose and hold back those who want to progress," the novel also shows how social status and value are shaped through the power relations of marriage. Jude the Obscure embodies, in Jude's attraction to Sue Bridehead, the prevalent Hardy motif of "the poor man and the lady," in which the hero pursues a woman of superior social class and education. The journey from the coarse and voluptuous Arabella to the refined and physically fastidious Sue parallels Jude's attempt to raise himself socially and to leave behind manual work for a life of the mind. There is a poignant counterpart to this in The Woodlanders, where Grace Melbury cements her rise in social status by marrying Edred Fitzpiers rather than the more worthy Giles Winterborne.

This is possible because women's exclusion from the agency allowed to men was compensated for by granting them a spurious moral and social superiority. Sue Bridehead is not of superior social class to Jude, but her gender and her education create the impression that she is. She is his cousin, born in the exact same humble cottage in which Jude grows up, and cast adrift from her family; her superior status is factitious, and is not underpinned by birth, money, or marriage. Her status is defined by contrast with Arabella. Eschewing the sexual availability of women like Arabella, Sue has access to a weakened version of the woman's sphere. She can be viewed as pure and purifying, and as socially, rather than just sexually, desirable.

Jude shrinks at the thought of Sue learning about his union with Arabella; the second meeting between the two women suggests a melodramatic meeting of 'Lady' and 'Prostitute.' The "figure" of Arabella is indistinct, "walking up and down by the lamp a few yards off," and Sue shrinks from the sexuality implied by Arabella's presence almost as she shrinks from Phillotson's advances: "She is such a low-passioned woman -- I can see it in her shape, and hear it in her voice" (330). This contrast between Sue and Arabella is made possible, however, by social conditions which they share, and which bring them into contact. Both are at different times 'married' to Jude; both are itinerant women with no clear social position; both are unable to guarantee their economic independence from men.

When the two women meet face to face at the Kennetbridge spring fair, the meeting favours Arabella socially. Sue is behind a stall, selling "Christminster cakes." Arabella at this point is a widow, and devoutly religious; she views Sue "from the serene heights of a soul conscious not only of spiritual but of social superiority." Arabella reacts to the anomalous erudition of Sue's thumbnail intellectual critique of Christminster: "Arabella was quizzing Sue with more regard of how she was speaking than of what she was saying. 'How odd to hear a woman selling cakes talk like that!' she said. 'Why don't you go back to school-keeping?'" (383).

Jude is also surprised at first by this: " . . . you don't talk quite like a girl -- well, a girl who has had no advantages." Sue's list of reading is impressive; she has the benefit of her author's erudition, usurping masculine knowledge in the process. Jude's wistful response that "You have read more than I" reinforces the notion of Sue as an authority:

she is the most learned and sympathetic mentor that Jude ever has. But Sue also exists, even more than Jude, outside traditional structures of learning, having acquired this education "by accident." This "accident" has come about because of Sue's unconventional attitude towards her gender: "My life has been entirely shaped by what people call a peculiarity in me. I have no fear of men, as such, nor of their books. I have mixed with them -- one or two of them particularly -- almost as one of their own sex" (201). Sue's "curious unconsciousness of gender" helps her gain access to male knowledge: her "friendly intimacy" with the Christminster undergraduate gets her, after a fashion, inside the institution which denies entrance so emphatically to Jude. The undergraduate had acted as a mentor for Sue: " . . . he taught me a great deal, and lent me books which I should never have got hold of otherwise."

Sue's blindness to the prevalence of male sexuality parallels Jude's inability to see his own relationship to the material conditions which define his life. This pattern is thus established early, as Sue describes herself and the undergraduate spending their time together "like two men almost." Sue had responded to the undergraduate's request that they live together, "by letter," but had completely misunderstood the spirit of this request. The situation as Sue narrates this story replicates the same pattern: Jude, harbouring strong sexual feelings for Sue; Sue herself, sitting there unaware of this, 'cross-dressed' in Jude's clothes while hers dry out before the fire.

Sue is as vulnerable to masculine narrative form as she is to masculine sexuality. She begins as a "divinity" and a "phantom"; she ends by collapsing into neurosis and conformity, abandoned by the narrative which had earlier picked her up and placed her in

Christminster to enable her to meet Jude. Sue's role in Jude the Obscure is to act as a foil to Jude, helping him to define his intellectual, social and sexual identity. She completes Jude's education by emphasizing its impossibility, and this subordinate role in the narrative replicates her socially subordinate role as a woman. Narrative foreclosure of desire is common for male characters, but for the women -- Maggie Tulliver, Gwendolen Harleth, Grace Melbury and Sue Bridehead -- their secondary social status, and the pressure on them from ideologies such as the woman's sphere to support others, drive them easily to the sidelines.

Despite deserting Jude to return to Phillotson, Sue remains indissolubly part of Jude's life. It is part of Jude's progression to self-knowledge that, towards the end, he can see this, while Sue's once-clear judgement has become clouded. Arabella's closing comment to the novel, spoken over Jude's dead body, that "She's never found peace since she left his arms, and never will again till she's as he is now!" suggests death is the only 'solution' available to Jude and Sue, the only way left for them to be together. But does this conclusion necessarily imply that Jude and Sue should have been prosaic, opportunistic survivors like Arabella, and that trying to 'improve' themselves through education was nothing more than quixotic foolishness? Does the novel present a picture of inexorable social and psychological determinism? It appears to, if we take the experiences of Jude and Sue as final; however, the extremity of dilemma they face makes their situation anomolous. This urgency and intensity of conflict is noted by Raymond Williams, who observes of Hardy's later novels: "People choose wrongly but under terrible pressures: under the confusions of class, under its misunderstandings, under the

calculated rejections of a divided separating world" (The Country and the City 213). As I have already noted, Jude the Obscure is a Bildungsroman, and, as Frank Giordano notes, this choice of form is appropriate: "In dramatizing the disparity between life as the masses wished it to be and as the sensitive experienced it, Hardy cast his novel in the form of the Bildungsroman" (589). The bleakness of Jude the Obscure was a slap in the face for the dominant mood of complacency amongst the middle-classes, one that gained added weight from the association of the Bildungsroman "with the popular and prevailing optimistic and comic visions of life" (589). This does not mean that we can sanitize Jude the Obscure, claiming it to be an aberration; but rather that Hardy had to turn up the volume to be heard above a joyous din of self-congratulation.

Also important in assessing Jude's education is the author's relationship to the work, and to the Bildungsroman form. Jude, although he attempts a social transformation comparable to Hardy's, carries within himself the split that would otherwise be caused by dislocation from the world of one's childhood and youth. Hardy 'succeeded' where Jude 'failed'; and this is in the pattern of the Bildungsroman: the hero is characterized finally by difference from the author. Death preserves Jude Fawley's integrity; it also preserves the author's own psychological integrity by a severance that asserts the fictionality and the impotence of the novel's hero.

To re-iterate a point made before, Jude's failed quest has the pay-off of greater self-knowledge. By the end of the novel, Jude has approached a state of clear-sighted resignation about himself and his situation which approximates the detached insight of the narrator. This does not sweep aside any unpleasant implications of Jude the Obscure,

but it does mean that Jude has gone as far as he can in a world which has no place for him, and that he has achieved what is a common goal for the hero of a novel. Even if Jude cannot overcome the problems he has encountered, he has reached an understanding of what these are, and shows that he can see beyond the ideologies of his time. This does not destroy or replace these ideologies, but it does show that consciousness outside them is possible. As Jude says of himself and Sue: "Our ideas were fifty years too soon to be any good to us." This, coming shortly before his death, shows Jude's now keen grasp of his relationship to society. Jude's final clarity of perception adds an ironic slant to John Stuart Mill's comment in Principles of Political Economy (1848) that "The aim of all intellectual training for the mass of the people should be to cultivate common sense; to qualify them for forming a sound practical judgement of the circumstances by which they are surrounded. Whatever in the intellectual department can be added to this is chiefly ornamental." Mill's comment defines the same gap that Jude tried to cross: that between prosaic, everyday knowledge fit for the "masses," and the "ornamental," "intellectual" knowledge reserved for an elite. And Jude learns that education -- especially in its selective availability -- works not to remove social distinctions, but to reinforce them.

CHAPTER IV NOTES

[1]Williams discusses this 'ambivalent' relationship in the chapter "Wessex and the Border" in The Country and the City.

[2]This does not apply exclusively to Hardy. In fact, given Hardy's very strong academic encouragement by his mother, and the better-than-average education he received, it is perhaps better applied to some of those he grew up amongst. For example, Hardy's uncle John Antell is considered to be a model for Jude Fawley. Robert Gittings' Young Thomas Hardy (1975) contains a reproduction of a sketch by Hardy for Antell's tombstone, which reads: "He was a man of considerable local reputation as a self-made scholar, having acquired a varied knowledge of languages, literature and science by unaided study, & in the face of many untoward circumstances." It is worth adding that Hardy's second wife insisted that Antell was "only partly" the model for Jude. This may be further evidence of Hardy's and Florence's concerted attempt to obscure his lowly beginnings.

[3]In arguing that education is integral to the structure of Jude the Obscure I am indebted especially to Frank R. Giordano's essay "Jude the Obscure and the Bildungsroman," which "seek[s] a unifying formal principle" in Hardy's novel by relating it to this genre.

[4]I obviously disagree with F. R. Southerington's claim that the "'war between flesh and spirit' is a concept which is only superficially connected with the work." Such a dismissal ignores the language of the novel; the pattern of allusions to sources as diverse as the Bible, Shelley, Matthew Arnold and Carlyle; and the events of the novel.

[5]Jude's periodic descents into the seedier regions of Christminster recall Bakhtin's discussion of 'carnival' in Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics. Bakhtin observes that "The primary carnivalistic act is the mock crowning and subsequent decrowning of the carnival king" (124). (Author's emphasis) Jude's drunken, pedantic disquisitions are received in a spirit of mock reverence; he is later seen wandering around as a typical drunk. The music-hall air of these scenes, with undergraduates, workers, and prostitutes mingling in apparent congeniality is an example of the "free and familiar contact among people" which characterizes the carnivalistic suspension of normally "impenetrable hierarchical barriers."

[6]Lawrence J. Starzyk, in his essay "The Coming Universal Wish Not to Live in Hardy's 'Modern' Novels," identifies the following passage from the Life "as the basis of Hardy's fiction and poetry as well":

> For my part, if there is any way of getting a melancholy satisfaction out of life it lies in dying, so to speak, before one is out of the flesh; by which I mean putting on the manners of ghosts, wandering in their haunts, and taking their

> views of surrounding things. To think of life as passing away is a sadness; to think of it as past is at least tolerable. Hence even when I enter a room to pay a simple morning call I have unconsciously the habit of regarding the scene as if I were a spectre not solid enough to influence my environment.

This is relevant to Jude's experience in Christminster, and to the narrator's detached pose throughout the novel. It may also be relevant to the ethereal Sue Bridehead; certainly, much of the language applied to her in the novel suggests a spirit-like lack of physical substance.

[7]Jude's allusion to Sartor Resartus provides its own backlash against his fascination with the egregious city. With this simile Carlyle's narrator is making an openly provisional attempt to characterize the inscrutable Teufelsdrockh, who is the advocate of arcane and spurious knowledge. Whereas the simile in Carlyle is applied conditionally and speculatively, Jude takes Christminster, his own Teufelsdrockh, at face value. The narrator of Jude the Obscure, better educated than his hero, can see the irony in this.

[8]Frank R. Giordano makes a very similar point from an ethical as opposed to a materialist position: "Jude must learn, as must modern existential man, to create the moral sanction for his choices and acts in a godless universe by performing as responsibly and authentically as possible."

CONCLUSION

In the preceding chapters, I examined the relationships among education, class, and gender in four nineteenth-century novels: The Mill on the Floss (1860) and Daniel Deronda (1876) by George Eliot; and The Woodlanders (1887) and Jude the Obscure (1896) by Thomas Hardy. Education fails as an agent of improvement, and of social mobility in these novels, and this failure contradicts the frequent liberal nineteenth-century claim (made, for example, by Jeremy Bentham, James Mill and others) that education, by promoting individual improvement, could lead to overall social improvement. There is a defeat of individual desire in these novels, which contrasts with the rhetoric of a century that vigorously promoted the individual. Both authors recognized that education was not the panacea many claimed it to be, and their fiction implies that the problems of personal and social improvement are too complex to be solved by education alone. Sharp differences between the socialization of men and women are evident: women face greater social constraint, and have less access to education or employment, but the sexes are linked by failure. It appears, throughout these novels, that character is indeed destiny; 'education' is true to its etymology, and only 'draws forth' qualities that pre-exist. It cannot essentially change character; it provides neither social nor psychological transcendence.

The failure of education may be common to both Eliot and Hardy, but it is presented quite differently by them. Failure is an integral part of the pessimistic, tragic world of Hardy's fiction, and there is little attempt to explain it away, or to moderate the

bleakness implied in human affairs. Eliot, though gradualist and cautious, believed in the possibility of individual and social improvement; the failure of education in her novels to satisfy desire is a reproach to egotism. Eliot's individuals are bound by the past, and by their ties to others; they cannot act purely for themselves.

Eliot's work has a strong counter-current of affirmation: her narrators assert the possibility of human progress, and affirm the power of community. Her fiction shows strong ties between individual and community: her communities are tightly bound, and her families are strong. Eliot had access to an affirmative voice, which grew from nurturing, regenerative notions of community, and her mediating commentary establishes connection with her characters. She did not see community as embodied in a particular place, or in a set of people; for her, it was a necessary basis for human interaction[1]. The very mechanisms used to suppress women, such as "the woman's sphere," allowed her to assert positive notions of identity in her fiction[2]. The ideology of the 'Woman's Sphere' prescribed limits for women, but it also made moral concessions to them, by providing them with regenerative notions of community and self-sacrifice.

Eliot believed that education could close the gap in intellect and seriousness between the sexes, and that it could 'draw forth' special qualities in women[3]. Her socially anomalous, yet empowering relationship with George Henry Lewes provided an example, as Lewes encouraged her to move beyond reviewing to fiction. This view of communion between the sexes paralleled contemporary visions of social inclusiveness, and reflected an optimistic, humanistic belief in progress[4].

Yet in attempting to recuperate ideas of progress, Eliot's fiction evaded

contradictions in the ideology of individualism and in the roles assigned to women. Eliot saw the novel as a way to heighten moral sensibility, and redirected her youthful evangelism through this medium[5]. This didacticism conflicted with the claims to objectivity inherent in the realistic novel; as a result, Eliot's endings often violate her own realistic criteria, and negate the possibilities her novels suggest[6].

Hardy's novels present the defeat of individual desire much more starkly than Eliot's. His characters are cut loose in a heartless world, with no power to change their pre-determined lot. They lack adequate family relationships, and there are no connections to prevent a slide towards tragedy. When Hardy's characters do not fit into their social position, they become increasingly isolated, and this isolation is intensified by the aloofness of the narrative voice[7]. His narrators avoid the self-characterization and use of the second-person pronoun common with Eliot's narrators; they do not moderate the suffering they show, and they do not attempt to reassure, as do Eliot's narrators. They appear flatly descriptive, explaining tragedy as the inevitable result of a hostile, random universe.

Hardy's protagonists are over-matched; they are frustrated and defeated by the world, but unable to change it[8]. Jude Fawley attempts a hopeless quest; Eustacia Vye hates the heath on which she lives, and her aspirations for a life beyond it are passionate, expansive, and impossible to fulfil. For Hardy's characters, dislocation is often tragic, with the protagonist ending up alone, outside community or family. The deathbed vigils common at the end of Hardy's novels emphasize the absence of companionship. Abe Whittle and Marty South can only muse on what they have lost or have never known, as

they watch their charges die.

As a man Hardy apparently had a clear path to intellectual and social advancement, but this was alienating. Raymond Williams comments on Hardy's "attempt to describe and value a way of life with which he was closely yet uncertainly connected," adding that this was complicated by his writing "to a mainly metropolitan and unconnected literary public" (The Country and the City 200). Hardy's first marriage was severely limiting, as the wide gulf in temperament and intellect between himself and Emma became impassable in middle age; the diatribes in his fiction against marriage mirror his own wish for salvation. Displacement from class and community unsettled both authors, but Eliot had resources which Hardy did not. It was difficult for Hardy to re-define his self, which had been alienated from its initial context.

The pessimism of Hardy's fiction has attracted much attention, and it can seem indiscriminate; yet it is not just a quirk of temperament. We think of Hardy as a pioneer of disengagement, but his novels are developments of existing literary tendencies[9]. Hardy, like Eliot, believed the novel could teach; his essay "The Profitable Reading of Fiction" outlines arguments which have much in common with Eliot's position[10]. The difference is in the commitment to the novel as a didactic medium: Hardy saw the form as a stepping-stone which would allow him the professional and the financial security to turn exclusively to poetry. Its didactic potential was incidental.

Obviously, the contrasting attitudes in the work of Eliot and Hardy towards self and community cannot be simply or quickly explained. There were many factors that influenced their respective aesthetic ideologies; of particular relevance to the preceding

analysis are the difference in gender, and the fact that, even though their careers overlapped in the 1870's, Hardy wrote at a later period than Eliot, and at a more advanced stage of capitalist development. In Marxism and Literature (1977), Raymond Williams discusses perceptions of historical change which involve "residual," "dominant," and "emergent" formations[11]. Hardy was closer to the "emergent" structures of the alienated, itinerant labour market of this century. Eliot had, in Williams' words, "a knowable community." Hardy did too, but the greater isolation of his characters is in part historical, and not solely the result of a psychological tendency to disengagement[12]. Hardy's narrative disengagement was not so much an escape from conflict, as an acknowledgement that individual aspirations were impossible to fulfil.

While there are differences in the extent of Eliot's and Hardy's pessimism, and while Eliot attempts to re-assert affirmative notions of identity, it is nonetheless the commonality and continuity between the two novelists which are striking. Both portray the defeat of individual desire, and both refer their characters' confusions of identity back to conceptions of an immutable inner self. Arguably, this acknowledgement of human intractability is truly "realistic." Benthamite associationist psychology denied this problem, but many commentators on the subject of education did not ignore it[13].

The tragedy of Tom and Maggie Tulliver, Gwendolen Harleth, Grace Melbury, Jude Fawley, and Sue Bridehead is that what they learn is insufficient. Their education cannot reconcile them to the contradictions of the worlds in which they live. Education is, as I discuss earlier, an agent of social organization, but it operates to integrate people into existing roles. It can provide technical and professional training, and it can thereby

enhance social integration. It usually fails to do even these things in the four novels I examine, but even when it does -- with Tom Tulliver, or Sue Bridehead, for example -- it cannot re-define character, nor can it satisfy an individual's desire. Tragically alone, smitten with "the modern vice of unrest," these characters cannot learn enough from education to overcome the limitations of class, of gender, or of their own psychology.

CONCLUSION NOTES

[1]Eliot's move from Warwickshire to London, from evangelist to literary matriarch, from dutiful daughter and sister to devoted yet socially outcast 'wife' of George Henry Lewes, were all journeys which had their parallel on the terrain of language. In Gillian Beer's view, the implicit movement seems to be 'away from' rather than 'towards' something; an attempt to escape which is defined by the very conditions it seeks to efface:

> But though the arc of desire may be escape from gender, the pre-conditions of the writing are bound to the writer's experience as social, sexual, historical being and the writing itself is a part of its culture. In the case of George Eliot we have a striking example of a writer who sought to slough off her own name and enter a neutral space through her own writing. (George Eliot 25)

[2]See Judith Lowder Newton, Women, Power and Subversion: Social Strategies in British Fiction, 1778-1860 (1981).

[3]Eliot expressed this view in an essay entitled "Woman in France: Madame de Sable" (Westminster Review, October 1854):

> A certain amount of psychological difference between man and woman necessarily arises out of the difference of sex, and instead of being destined to vanish before a complete development of woman's intellectual and moral nature, will be a permanent source of variety and beauty, as long as the tender light and dewy freshness of morning affect us differently from the strength and brilliance of the mid-day sun.

[4]The following passage from Thomas Henry Huxley's "Science and Culture" displays a typical faith in the power of mutual understanding:

> . . . the prosperity of industry depends not merely upon the improvement of manufacturing processes, not merely upon the ennobling of the individual character, but upon a third condition, namely, a clear understanding of the conditions of social life, on the part of both the capitalist and the operative, and their agreement upon common principles of social action. (Buckler 536)

[5]Eliot makes a characteristic comment in a letter to Charles Bray on 5 July 1859:

> The only effect I ardently long to produce by my writings, is that those who read them should be better able to imagine and feel the pains and the joys of those who differ from themselves in everything but the broad fact of being struggling erring human creatures. (Letters 3: 111)

[6]Gillian Beer, noting that "George Eliot has been a knot of controversy for feminist critics," writes that "One key problem has been the obduracy with which she encloses her heroines within the confines of ordinary possibility, confines from which the author had, by means of her writing, escaped" (George Eliot 3).

[7]It is, of course, misleading to suggest that the concept of community is specifically female. Suzanne Graver's George Eliot and Community (1984) sets Eliot's idea of community in a "theoretical tradition" including Strauss, Feuerbach, Comte, Spencer, and John Stuart Mill. These thinkers discussed community in terms of

> the place of traditional belief and custom; the relation of individualistic to social values; and the difficulty of creating new forms to counteract the fragmented, self-serving, and isolating tendencies of increasingly heterogeneous and complex societies. (3)

The important issue for this study is the extent to which women were encouraged to reinforce community by acts of self-sacrifice.

[8]The novel typically presents an over-matched protagonist. In Bakhtin's words, "One of the basic internal themes of the novel is precisely the theme of the hero's inadequacy to his fate or his situation" (15).

[9]Raymond Williams is writing of George Eliot -- the "Author's Introduction" to Felix Holt -- when he comments:

> But the real step that has been taken is withdrawal from any full response to an existing society. Value is in the past, as a general retrospective condition, and is in the present only as a particular and private sensibility, the individual moral action. (The Country and the City 180)

[10]Hardy wrote in "The Profitable Reading of Fiction": "Our true object is a lesson in life, mental enlargement from elements essential to the narratives themselves and from the reflections they engender" (Orel 114). While the basic point is similar to Eliot's, Hardy's language is vaguer and less emphatic; we should also note the greater stress Hardy placed on "the aesthetic training insensibly given by familiarity with story which, presenting nothing exceptional in other respects, has the merit of being well and artistically constructed" (Orel 120).

[11]See Marxism and Literature, pp. 121-127.

[12]G. W. Sherman has argued that "The cause of his pessimism was not his loss of faith from having read Darwin's Origins of Species as a young man, but his loss of faith in the leaders of society, both Whig and Tory alike, after 1867" (24). Hardy had less reason to feel the optimism of his predecessors; writing late in the century, he could see the debilitating results of progress.

[13]John Henry Newman wrote in "Knowledge Its Own End," in The Idea of a University (1852), of the difficulty of changing human nature:

> Quarry the granite rock with razors, or moor the vessel with a thread of silk; then may you hope with such keen and delicate instruments as human

knowledge and human reason to contend against those giants, the passion and the pride of man. (Buckler 192)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abel, Elizabeth; Hirsch, Marianne; & Langland, Elizabeth, eds. The Voyage In: Fictions of Female Development. Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1983.

Adamson, John W. English Education 1789-1902. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1930; reprinted 1964.

Anderson, Perry. Considerations on Western Marxism. London: New Left Books, 1976.

Armstrong, Nancy. Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.

Armytage, W. H. G. The French Influence on English Education. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968.

Arnold, Matthew. Culture and Anarchy. Ed. J. Dover Wilson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1932.

Auerbach, Nina. Woman and the Demon: The Life of a Victorian Myth. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982.

Auerbach, Nina. Romantic Imprisonment: Women and Other Glorified Outcasts. New York: Columbia University Press, 1985.

Bakhtin, M.M. The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays. ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981.

Bakhtin, Mikhail M. Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics. ed. & trans. Caryl Emerson. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.

Bauer, Carol & Ritt, Lawrence. Free and Ennobled: Source Readings in the Development of Victorian Feminism. Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1979.

Bayley, John. An Essay on Hardy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978.

Beer, Gillian. Darwin's Plots: Evolutionary Narrative in Darwin, George Eliot and Nineteenth Century Fiction. London: Routledge, 1983.

Beer, Gillian. George Eliot. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986.

Beer, Patricia. Reader, I Married Him: A Study of the Women Characters of Jane

Austen, Charlotte Bronte, Elizabeth Gaskell and George Eliot. New York: Barnes & Noble, 1974.

Belsey, Catherine. Critical Practice. London: Methuen, 1980.

Benvenuto, Richard. "Modes of Perception: The Will to Live in 'Jude the Obscure'." Studies in the Novel 2 (1970).

Bibby, Cyril ed. T.H. Huxley on Education. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971.

Bloom, Harold ed. Thomas Hardy's "Jude the Obscure": Modern Critical Interpretations. New York: Chelsea House, 1986.

Bloom, Harold, ed. George Eliot: Modern Critical Views. New York: Chelsea House, 1987.

Brownstein, Rachel. Becoming a Heroine: Reading About Women in Novels. New York: Viking, 1982.

Buckler, Wlliam E., ed. Prose of the Victorian Period. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1958.

Buckley, Jerome Hamilton. Season of Youth: The Bildungsroman from Dickens to Golding. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1974.

Byatt, A. S. ed. George Eliot: Selected Essays, Poems and Other Writings. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1990.

Calder, Jenny. Women and Marriage in Victorian Fiction. New York: Oxford University Press, 1976.

Colby, Vineta. Yesterday's Woman: Domestic Realism in the English Novel. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974.

Cottom, Daniel. Social Figures: George Eliot, Social History, and Literary Representation. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987.

Davies, Emily. The Higher Education of Women. London: Alexander Strahan, 1866 (AMS reprint, 1973).

De Laura, David J. "'The Ache of Modernism' in Hardy's Later Novels." ELH 34 (1967).

Eagleton, Terry. Literary Theory: An Introduction. Minneapolis: University of

Minnesota Press, 1983.

Eliot, George. The Mill on the Floss Ed. Byatt, A. S. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1979.

Eliot, George. Daniel Deronda Ed. Hardy, Barbara. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1967.

Gallagher, Catherine. The Industrial Reformation of English Fiction, 1832-1867. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985.

Giordano, Frank R., Jr. "Jude the Obscure and the Bildungsroman." Studies in the Novel 4, Winter 1972.

Gittings, Robert. Young Thomas Hardy. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1975.

Gittings, Robert. Thomas Hardy's Later Years. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1978.

Goodin, George, ed. The English Novel in the Nineteenth Century: Essays on the Literary Mediation of Human Values. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1972.

Graver, Suzanne. George Eliot and Community: A Study in Social Theory and Fictional Form. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984.

Gregor, Ian. "Jude the Obscure." in Gregor, Ian & Mack, Maynard eds. Essays on Some English Novelists in Honour of John Butt. London: Methuen, 1968.

Guerard, Albert J. ed. Hardy: A Collection of Critical Essays (Twentieth Century Views). Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1963.

Haight, Gordon S., ed. The George Eliot Letters. (9 vols.) New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979.

Hardy, Barbara. The Novels of George Eliot: A Study in Form. London: University of London, Athlone Press, 1959 (revised 1963).

Hardy, Florence E. The Life of Thomas Hardy: 1840-1928. London, 1928.

Hardy, Thomas. The Return of the Native. Ed. Woodcock, George. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1978.

Hardy, Thomas. The Woodlanders. Ed. Gibson, James. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1981.

Hardy Thomas. Jude the Obscure. Ed. Sisson, C. H. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1978.

Helsinger, Elizabeth K.; Sheets, Robin Lauterbach; & Veeder, William. The Woman Question: Society and Literature in Britain and America, 1837-1883. (3 vols.) New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1983.

Herstein, Sheila R. A Mid-Victorian Feminist, Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985.

Holland, Norman Jr. "Jude the Obscure: Hardy's Symbolic Indictment of Christianity." Nineteenth-Century Fiction, Vol. 9, (1954), pp.50-60.

Hyman, Virginia R. Ethical Perspective in the Novels of Thomas Hardy. Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1975.

Knoepflmacher, U. C. Religious Humanism and the Victorian Novel: George Eliot, Walter Pater, and Samuel Butler. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965.

Kramer, Dale. Thomas Hardy: The Forms of Tragedy. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1975.

Locke, John. Some Thoughts Concerning Education. ed. John W. & Jean S. Yolton. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989.

Macherey, Pierre. A Theory of Literary Production. trans. Geoffrey Wall. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978.

McDonnell, Jane. "'Perfect Goodness' or 'The Wider Life': The Mill on the Floss as a Bildungsroman." Genre XV, Winter 1982, 379-402.

Mill, John Stuart. Autobiography. Ed. Stillinger, Jack. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1969.

Millett, Kate. Sexual Politics. New York: Random House, 1978.

Morgan, R. "Pernicious Conventions in The Woodlanders." Thomas Hardy Yearbook 17, 1988, 54-62.

Newton, Judith Lowder. Women, Power and Subversion: Social Strategies in British Fiction, 1778-1860. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1981.

Newton, K.M. ed. George Eliot. London: Longman, 1991.

Page, Norman ed. Thomas Hardy: The Writer and his Background. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980.

Pinney, Thomas ed. Essays of George Eliot. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963.

Poovey, Mary. Uneven Developments: The Ideological Work of Gender in Mid-Victorian England. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988.

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. Emile. (Oeuvres Completes, Vol. IV) Editions Gallimard, 1969.

Ruskin, John. "Unto This Last" and Other Writings. Ed. Wilmer, Clive. London: Penguin, 1985.

Ruskin, John. Sesame and Lilies. Philadelphia: Henry Altemus, 1871.

Sherman, G.W. The Pessimism of Thomas Hardy. Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Press, 1976.

Showalter, Elaine, ed. The New Feminist Criticism: Essays on Women, Literature & Theory. New York: Pantheon, 1985.

Smith, Anne, ed. The Novels of Thomas Hardy. London: Vision Press, 1979.

Smith, Anne ed. George Eliot: Centenary Essays and an Unpublished Fragment. Totowa, N.J.: Barnes & Noble, 1980.

Southerington, F. R. "Thomas Hardy in 'Jude the Obscure'." Hardy Yearbook, 1970.

Starzyk, Lawrence J. "The Coming Universal Wish Not to Live in Hardy's "Modern" Novels." Nineteenth Century Fiction 26 (1971-72).

Sutherland, John. "A Note on the Teasing Narrator in Jude the Obscure." English Literature in Transition 17 (1974).

Taylor, Ina. A Woman of Contradictions: The Life of George Eliot. New York: William Morrow, 1989.

Thomson, David. England in the Nineteenth Century (1815-1914). Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1950.

Ulich, Robert ed. Three Thousand Years of Educational Wisdom: Selections from Great Documents. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965.

Vicinus, Martha, ed. Suffer and Be Still: Women in the Victorian Age. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1972.

Vicinus, Martha, ed. A Widening Sphere: Changing Roles of Victorian Women. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977.

Vigar, Penelope. The Novels of Thomas Hardy: Illusion and Reality. London: University of London Athlone Press, 1974.

Widdowson, Peter ed. Re-Reading English. London: Methuen, 1982.

Williams, Raymond. Culture and Society: 1780-1950. New York: Columbia University Press, 1958.

Williams, Raymond. The Long Revolution. New York: Columbia University Press, 1961.

Williams, Raymond. The Country and the City. New York: Oxford University Press, 1973.

Williams, Raymond. Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society. New York: Oxford University Press, 1976.

Williams, Raymond. Marxism and Literature. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977.

Woodworth, Marc. "Work and the Word: A Reading of 'Jude the Obscure." Thomas Hardy Yearbook, #16 (1988).

Wotton, George. Thomas Hardy: Towards a Materialist Criticism. Totowa, N.J.: Barnes & Noble, 1985.